NOTES AND COMMENTS

OCTOBER, 1937

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The Law of Retribution

Karma . . . is the power that controls all things, the resultant of moral action, the metaphysical Samskara, *or the moral effect of an act committed for the attainment of something which gratifies a personal desire. There is the Karma of merit and the Karma of demerit. Karma neither punishes nor rewards, it is simply* the one *Universal* Law *which guides unerringly and, so to speak, blindly, all other laws productive of certain effects along the grooves of their respective causations. When Buddhism teaches that "Karma is that moral kernel (of any being) which alone survives death and continues in transmigration" or reincarnation, it simply means that there remains nought after each personality but the causes produced by it, causes which are undying,* i. e., *which cannot be eliminated from the Universe until replaced by their legitimate effects, and wiped out by them, so to speak, and such causes, unless compensated during the life of the person who produced them with adequate effects, will follow the reincarnated Ego, and reach it in its subsequent reincarnation until a harmony between effects and causes is fully established* (Theosophical Glossary, p. 161).

IN St. Paul's words: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Such is the law, and man is as incapable of changing it as he is of abolishing by edict or legislation the fact that he has lived, that he has a past. Every act, moral or immoral, good or evil, definitely affects, for better or for worse, the circumstances of our lives and the course of our existence. The law of retribution or Nemesis is as much a part of Nature as the law of gravitation. Like the law of gravitation, it may be said to act blindly, because it is inexorable and can be neither gainsaid nor mollified by any conceivable argument.

It is well to begin by accepting Nemesis, as the Greek tragic poets accepted it, in its unadulterated rigour. Nemesis is, indeed, only one aspect of "the one Universal Law". Karma signifies much more than the execution of justice.

Nevertheless, it is a sign of human dignity to recognize that sorrow and tragedy and frustration are not accidents of heredity and environment, but are the proper effects of causes generated by us in this or an earlier life. Although the modern mind may try to deny or ignore the actuality of evil and sin, it is none the less an experienced fact that evil and sin exist; nor is there any escape from them save by the turning of the heart, by the act of will which our ancestors described by the word, repentance. But how can one turn away from an evil to which one is blind?

The colloquy between the Master Christ and the repentant thief illustrates this theme and offers a perpetual subject for meditation. Unless a man admits, in some degree, his karmic debt and resolves to pay it in full, God Himself cannot arrest his descent into hell, although the Infinite Compassion of Divine Nature may withhold for long periods the full consequences of his misdeeds, multiplying the opportunities for repentance. So God causes His sun to shine upon the just and the unjust.

Some Delusions of the Clergy

One ventures to suggest what should be one function of the priest. The true priest does not sit in judgment on other men, but in so far as his vocation is real and not assumed, he seeks to become in some way an intermediary between his Master and those who are blinder than himself. Thus he can bring light to the surrounding darkness, helping men to realize the cause of their miseries, leading them by his own example to the point where they despise the mode of life which has produced their present condition, where they determine to amend their conduct.

In brief, the priest should minister to the soul. For that purpose he needs the spirit of self-surrender, an uncompromising devotion to his Master and his Master's work. If he have knowledge and wisdom as well as devotion, so much the better. But he can perform his work without wealth or power or worldly prestige. He is not called to be a politician or an economist or a "cheer-leader". Any activity which subordinates the needs of the soul to the demands of the flesh, should be alien to him.

At the present time, a goodly number of the clergy, Catholic as well as Protestant, are playing at social revolution. Some may be guilty of crude ambition, using their alleged spiritual office to strengthen—as they fancy—their worldly position, or their "influence". Others may merely desire to be on the side of the majority, fearing that they will lose everything if they do not at once join the party which threatens the old order. Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that the vast majority are moved by genuine sympathy for physical distress and poverty. The trouble is that their sympathy is larded with sentimentality and with gross misunderstanding of the real issues involved. However good their intentions, they are proving the inadequacy of their faith in "God, the soul and immortality". Whether they realize it or not, they are deserting the charge which they accepted at ordination. They are neglecting the cure of souls under the pretence that no soul can be saved until the body which it in-

habits enjoys security and even luxury in an Utopian environment. In fairness, it must be admitted that they were not prepared for a spiritual office by their education. We do not know what is the curriculum of studies in most theological seminaries, but in some at least, the principal subjects seem to be economics and international politics and popular science. There is a science of spiritual law. Where is it taught to-day, and how many are competent to teach it?

We quote from a report of the National Conference of Jews and Christians:

> Religious activity in strike zones has ranged from opinions voiced in sermons to such practical steps as feeding strikers and adjudicating disputes. C.I.O., the sit-down strike, local law officers, the Federal Government, all come in for a share of praise and blame by clergymen, but the large majority of opinion has been in favour of labour's efforts to win collective bargaining rights. The clergy have been generally on the side of labour. . . . In Pittsburgh, the Catholic Radical Alliance, after investigating the claims of both employers and employees in the Loose-Wiles and Heinz plant strikes, supported the strikers, and brought Catholic laymen to swell the picket lines. . . . Dr. Howard M. Wells, Presbyterian minister of Cleveland, declared that the militia had been brought to Cleveland by a reactionary steel management to break the strike. . . . The active intervention of a committee of ministers in Gadsden, Ala., drew a sharp rebuff from local law officers. Growing interest on the part of clergymen in the industrial situation is clearly evidenced by the number of resolutions approved in recently held conventions of religious bodies.

There are many exceptions. All the clergy have not joined the rebellion against law and order, as the authors of this report are obliged reluctantly to admit. But the facts are none the less scandalous. Have these so-called Ministers of the Gospel utterly forgotten the injunction: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's"? They might profitably recall the example of John Wesley. Wesley doubtless had limitations and shortcomings, but, as has been suggested, he did more than any other individual to save England from the contagion of the French Revolution. Such an accomplishment was possible because he stirred to life, even among the most brutalized elements of English society, the conviction that the demands of the soul are more pressing than those of the body. There is no evidence that Wesley approved of the "labour conditions" of eighteenth-century England. They were, indeed, more inhuman and harsh than anything which our most imaginative social workers can depict. But Wesley realized the truth, so widely neglected to-day, that the outer reflects the inner, that economic conditions are the effects of spiritual conditions and can only be veritably changed for the better by the cure of souls.

The Twelve Nidanas

We read in the *Maha-Vagga*, one of the Buddhist Pali scriptures:

> Having attained Buddhaship, the Buddha, the Blessed One, was dwelling at Uruvela. Then for seven days the Blessed One sat at the foot of the Bo-tree experiencing the bliss of liberation. During the first watch of the night he meditated upon the Twelve *Nidanas*, the Causes of Existence, forward and backward:
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> On unwisdom (*avidya*) depends the impulse towards incarnation (*samskara*); on the

impulse towards incarnation depends the sense of being a separate self (*vijñana*); on the sense of being a separate self depends personality (*namarupa*); on personality depend the sense-organs (*chadayatana*); on the sense-organs depends feeling (*sparsha*); on feeling depends perception (*vedana*); on perception depends desire for sensation (*trishna*); on desire for sensation depends attachment (*upadana*); on attachment depend the modes of existence (*bhava*); on the modes of existence depends birth (*jati*); on birth depend old age and death (*jaramarana*), sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief and despair. Thus does the entire aggregate of misery arise.

But when unwisdom fades out, the impulse towards incarnation ceases; when the impulse towards incarnation fades out, the sense of being a separate self ceases; when the sense of being a separate self fades out, personality ceases; when personality fades out, the sense-organs disappear; when the sense-organs disappear, feeling ceases; when feeling fades out, perception ceases; when perception fades out, desire for sensation ceases; when desire for sensation fades out, attachment ceases; when attachment fades out, the modes of existence cease to be; when the modes of existence cease to be, there is no birth; when there is no birth, there is a cessation of old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief and despair. Thus does the entire aggregate of misery come to an end.

The *nidanas* or stages of Karma have been converted into a sort of rigid formula by the Hinayana School. Partly under Hinayana influence, partly because of their native materialism, many Orientalists have attributed to the Buddha a mechanistic view of Nature which led him to affirm that man's moral life is subject to the same inflexible determinism that prevails in the domain of physics and mechanics. This represents a serious misunderstanding of the whole purport of the Buddha's teaching. He explained at great length that it is not the apparently good or evil deed itself which sets the karmic process in motion, but the intent, the state of consciousness behind and within the deed. He compared the fruition of our action to the growth of a plant from a seed.

It is like seed, brethren, which is uninjured, undecayed, unharmed by wind or heat, and is sown on fertile soil; if then rain fall in due season, then will that seed attain to growth and increase. In exactly the same way, brethren, when a man's deeds are performed through covetousness or hatred or infatuation, wherever his personality may be, there those deeds ripen, and wherever they ripen, there he experiences the fruition of those deeds, be it in the present life, or in some subsequent one (*Anguttara-Nikaya*).

The Fruition of Unwisdom

Moreover, the Buddha was not speaking of remote metaphysical contingencies, but of events within the range of every human experience. We are constantly enacting the *nidanas* within ourselves. It is instructive to follow the effects of any emotion or thought or outer act, to observe how the series of events successively unfolds one *nidana* after another, almost always terminating, as we know too well, in some form of dissatisfaction or sorrow or despair. We cannot study ourselves without studying the "causes of existence". In the degree that he identifies himself with his lower personal nature, with the "self" of his average moments, every man is a fruition of unwisdom.

Unwisdom, *avidya*, is sometimes used as a synonym for *maya*, the magical power of cosmic illusion which makes the One appear as the many. In this sense, *avidya* is not necessarily a cause of evil and misery, for it is only by means

of limitation and differentiation—the One Self reflected in the atom, God in man—that Pure Spirit can attain self-consciousness. But the Buddha seems to have used the term to denote in particular the common root of egotism and sensuality in man. It is, as it were, the source of "original sin", the "subconscious" seed which is transformed into self-will and personal desire and phantasy. Because of *avidya*, we surround ourselves with delusions, imagining the real to be unreal and the unreal to be real.

Karma is blind only in the sense that it invincibly tends to bring to fruition every seed of consciousness. In every case, the punishment fits the crime, but the justice of this divine retribution is not adequately symbolized by our human laws; for Karma is indeed the Good Law, meting out to man the consequences of his deeds in the way which is most likely to awaken him to a realization of his own sin and unwisdom, and always holding before him the possibility of repentance and consequent liberation from the "chain of causation". Only self-will prevents us from recognizing that "the entire aggregate of misery" is not the meaningless round that it seems to be. As Theosophy teaches, the Good Law is administered by agents, by divine hierarchies and powers, specifically for mankind by the Lodge of Masters, by those who are called "Lords of Karma" because they have learned for themselves the lesson of Karma, because they have "burned the seed of unwisdom with fire and have scattered it to the winds". It is a fundamental tenet of the doctrine that the divine host itself cannot force or change the human will. Man must choose misery or bliss for himself. All that the agents of the Good Law can do is to impress him through events, leaving him to self-generated pain and despair, if necessary, in order to reveal the vanity and danger of his course. This "instruction" assumes a unique form for every individual, since his needs cannot conceivably be identical with the needs of any other individual. We can postulate certain general principles denoting various modes of karmic action; but only a Lord of Karma can foresee how the law of retribution will affect a particular person under particular conditions.

If the Christian clergy were capable of studying Buddhism with detachment and without invidious comparisons, they would, in many instances, for the first time acquire some real understanding of the teaching of their own Master. The truths taught by the Buddha are identical in essence with those taught by the Christ; only the method and form of expression differ; and as the knowledge of our native literature is enriched by the study of other languages, so the knowledge of the Christian doctrine is enriched by the study of the thoughts and acts of other Masters. Students of Theosophy can testify that when an idiom has become almost meaningless through lifeless repetition, its sense can be recovered by recognition of the truth for which it stands, as this truth has been formulated in other idioms.

For example, if some of our radical clergymen had any conception of the Buddhist teaching concerning Karma, they would have recognized that the Master Christ taught the same doctrine in other terms. Only a Lord of Karma can have the right to pronounce the words which so often accompanied his

acts of healing: "Thy sins be forgiven thee". In any event, if these clergymen believed in a real law of retribution, they would not try to cure poverty and misery by encouraging men to increase and fortify still further their "unwisdom", nor would they imagine that all the evils of the world can be removed by "collective bargaining" and the "liquidation" of "reactionaries".

The Possibility of Liberation

It is necessary to remind ourselves that unwisdom, though "beginningless", can yet be brought to an end. As has been suggested, the *nidanas* may be said to exist for the purpose of destroying their "first cause", *avidya*. The fruition of unwisdom is so unbearable that at last the sufferer may be inclined to turn towards repentance, if only because he can conceive of nothing worse than his actual condition. And this act of turning should mark the beginning of the end of unwisdom, the first step upon the path to liberation from the "circle of necessity". "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

However, it can be found and has been found. The bonds of Karma fall away when the lesson of bondage is learned, inasmuch as these fetters only come into existence for the correction of the soul. In the last six cantos of the *Purgatorio*, Dante symbolizes what may be described as an *initiation* of the soul, whereby it enters into positive knowledge that bliss and perfect freedom are proper to its nature. At the summit of the Mount, in the Earthly Paradise where man dwelt before the fall, the poet comes to a stream of pure water. On the far bank he sees the Lady Matilda, whose presence awakens the memory of a Golden Age,—"where and what Proserpina was in the time her mother lost her, and she lost the spring". Matilda explains that the river which divides them "is called on the one side Lethe, on the other Eunoe." "On this side it descends with a virtue which takes from men the memory of sin; on the other, it restores the memory of all good deeds." It is only after he sees Beatrice and she rebukes him for his reluctance to face his sins—so that he confesses them with shame—that he is drawn through the water by Matilda, and then sees Beatrice, Divine Wisdom, "unveiled".

At the same time, another mystery is revealed to Dante, that the flowers of Paradise "have such virtue that they impregnate the air which in its original motion scatters that essence abroad, . . . and were this understood, it would not then seem a marvel yonder [on earth] when some plant takes root there without manifest seed." Even so, as has been said, from inner and superior worlds can be wafted potencies of good which are not the karmic "seeds" of any acts of man or earth. Does this not suggest one meaning of the Vicarious Atonement, made manifest whenever a Master or an Avatar, like the Buddha or the Christ, appears in bodily form among mortal men?

All the vicissitudes of experience take on a new aspect when they are seen as episodes in a process designed by Divine Nature for the purpose of releasing the soul from the prison where it has condemned itself to live. We cannot hope to taste Lethe or Eunoe until, like Dante, we face our sins, the causes of our

vicissitudes, and are "stung with the nettle of repentance". By no other means can we escape from our self-generated delusions. Therefore, in the strict meaning of the word, all Karma is *good* Karma. Karma may assume the most terrible, the most horrendous appearances, but its true name, given by the Buddha, is the Good Law. Like Yama, the God of Death, in the *Katha Upanishad*, the Good Law reveals that supreme agony may become the gateway of regeneration.

Active and Passive Spirit

The term "Spirit" is so general and abstract that it has come to mean almost anything or nothing. Here again we may learn much from the study of ancient Indian scriptures. The working hypothesis of the true Vedanta of Shankara, for instance, is that Spirit is Real Being as It is in Itself. It is summed up in the equation: "The Atman and Brahma are one", that is, the true Self of every individual being is an undivided part of the Great Self of the Universe, the spiritual man is inseparable from God. This is a magnificent metaphysical affirmation, but it is also something more, for it suggests the mystical attitude of heart which the individual must maintain in order to gain liberation and enlightenment. The Self in the individual becomes aware of its identity with the One Self of all Nature by responding to the constant presence of that One Self within it and above it. The individual and the Universal may thus be said to be related to one another as the passive and active aspects of an indivisible unity.

However, between the Absolute Self of all that is, and the individual human entity, there is an infinite gulf of mystery which the consciousness of man as he is could never span in a thousand thousand ages. "You will enter the light, but you will never touch the flame." There is boundless consolation in the theosophical testimony that this gulf is in reality filled by a host of active divine beings, by an unbroken hierarchy of "creators" and "builders", representing all the stages of the Spirit in its *active*, liberated, enlightened condition between the Absolute and mortal man. Thus although the Spirit in mortal man is still passive, clouded by a film of unwisdom, it can be translated into an active condition by conscious union with the particular active ray of divine light of which it is a prolongation. "Some plant takes root there without manifest seed." The individual finding his Heavenly Father, his Master, in the inner world, can become in his turn a Lord of Karma, instead of its subject. "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High."

The Embodiment of the Spirit

There is a false asceticism, especially in the East, which is based upon the assumption that all manifestation is unqualifiedly evil; that the great Universe itself would never have come into being if there had not been a pre-existing dark and violent purpose in the first nature of things which demanded and achieved expression. This pessimism, which was popularized for the modern West by Schopenhauer, seems to have been partly based upon a distortion of the doctrine of Karma as this was set forth in the Buddhist and other scrip-

tures. If it were true, the logical course of the human soul would indeed be to seek annihilation.

But even our limited observation of Nature reveals that it cannot possibly be true. We are speaking of purposes and processes infinitely beyond the capacity of our feeble understanding; but surely experience bears witness to the fact that our human nature, fallen and degraded though it be, is not solely the embodiment and fruition of unwisdom. Unwisdom is there, but also there is wisdom, potentially if not actually. However, this wisdom remains passive unless it be made manifest, unless it be embodied, clothed in substance, made visible, endowed with form.

Mahayana Buddhism expresses our experience of the twofold quality of manifestation by the doctrine of the *alaya*. The *alaya* is the *anima mundi*, the Soul of the World, present in its integrity both in the Universe as a whole and in every atom or part thereof in each stage of development. It is compared to a granary containing seeds of every kind and description, all of which are destined to germinate in due season. There are the seeds, the *skandhas*, of all past illusions and misdeeds and failures, and there are the seeds of all possible future attainments of divinity. It is another version of the Parable of the Sower. The tares must grow, for otherwise they can never be uprooted; but the whole of space and time constitute the field where the good grain can put forth the form which is latent in it. In the terminology of the Platonists, the Universe exists for the purpose of making visible that which is invisible, of incarnating in every creature the archetype, the *idea* in the Divine Mind, which it is destined to show forth.

Progress and Catastrophe

These considerations seem to be pertinent to a theme much discussed to-day —the nature of progress and the possibility of catastrophe in some future, near or remote. Two recent books deal directly with this subject. Both are interesting and stimulating to thought, although their conclusions, which are quite different, leave at least one reader with a sense of deep dissatisfaction. The authors are like most physicians, who know that their patients are sick, but understand neither their disease nor its cure; we cannot refrain from expressing the regret that they have not studied Theosophy.

Progress and Catastrophe[1] is an eloquent protest against the nineteenth-century assumption that progress in Nature and man is virtually identical with change; that we cannot help improving and increasing in happiness and wisdom because it is an intrinsic quality of all things that they must continuously grow more excellent in every way from day to day. This naïve optimism, which incidentally denies any freedom of the human will, appears to have been based upon the extraordinary series of scientific discoveries and inventions which transformed the outer conditions of human life during the past century. As Mr. Casson points out, it took no note of two fundamental facts. It did not

[1] *Progress and Catastrophe, an Anatomy of Human Adventure*, by Stanley Casson, Fellow of New College, Oxford; Harper & Brothers, New York and London, 1937.

recognize that the study of history reveals no continuous progress, but rather an alternation of civilization and barbarism. Moreover, the prophets of inevitable progress utterly failed to realize that scientific invention can destroy our alleged comforts and luxuries at least as easily as it can create them. Poison gas and the air bomber are as much the products of "science" as the telephone and the telescope.

> The general idea of progress . . . was derived from the extremely popular expositions of evolution made by Darwin and Huxley. . . . The ancient Greeks had no word at all by which we can translate the term. "Do you believe in progress?" would to them have been a question wholly devoid of sense. . . . They knew that with change could come improvement and amelioration; but they also knew that such improvement could be achieved only by immense human experiment and labour; there was no immutable force which willed that mankind should always move onwards, improving inevitably as the accumulated wisdom of one generation was added to that of the next. . . . The Greeks knew that it is only by the untiring efforts of one generation that the sins of the preceding generation could be wiped out, and then, even so, you had no more than a fair start towards something better. . . . That progress does in fact occur on occasions nobody but a fool would deny. That it is cumulative and inevitable no one but an idiot would accept. What we have to find out is whether the advance of one period is ever really indebted to the progressive discoveries of that which preceded it, whether we advance only to retire, or advance five steps to slide back only three. . . . If progress is to achieve anything at all beyond a mere unlearning of the lessons of the past and beginning again, . . . it must be a snow-ball movement by which little is lost and something always added.

Mr. Casson proceeds to review the evidence from the point of view of the archæologist. The most durable material progress seems to have been made by the earlier races of man before the dawn of the historical civilizations. The art of making fire, the invention of the plough, the domestication of animals, the foundation of the arts and handicrafts, the development of metallurgy, represent achievements which have persisted even during the darkest of the ages which have followed. On the other hand, both the material and the spiritual accomplishments of the great civilizations which preceded our own, have been far more fragile. The urban societies and the empires, the religions and sciences and arts, the refinements and graces, of Sumeria and Egypt, of Greece and Rome, passed away, leaving nothing but heaps of stone and scattered fragments, and a more or less mutilated body of traditions. A new civilization has been erected upon the vast ruin of antiquity, but to-day this edifice is threatened with a wider and more colossal catastrophe than that which reduced to naught the power and prestige of Rome.

What is the cause of this mortality of civilization? Mr. Casson suggests that in general the disease which attacks and ultimately undermines highly organized societies is "the splitting up of a homogeneous whole into warring parts . . . the rivalry within a unit of certain of its elements, the warring of healthy and unhealthy germs within the blood-stream, the great disease of humanity that always reduces it to impotence and decay." The remedy which he proposes is internationalism, although he is most vague as to what he means by that term or how he expects his dream can be realized. He admits that

this is a "slender hope", and the hope grows even more slender when it appears that it depends almost wholly upon the support of "the despised student, researcher, professor, the non-political worker in science, the arts and literature".

The Source of Civilization

At this point Mr. Casson leaves us, and we leave his book not much wiser than we were before. We grant that decomposition is one of the symptoms of a dying culture, but what is the cause of decomposition? And as for "the non-political worker in science, the arts and literature", he has already done damage enough to the fabric of our civilization without being invited to do more. Mr. Casson violently disapproves of current "anti-intellectual" developments in Russia, Germany and Italy; but communism, nazism and fascism were, in the first instance, products of the minds of "professors" and "brain-trusters". The politician reaps what the "intellectual" sows.

The Source of Civilization[2] proposes an answer to the question, What is the cause of social decomposition? Mr. Heard notes the same phenomenon repeating itself in the old age of civilizations, the same "splitting up of a homogeneous whole into warring parts". The diagnosis and the cure which he suggests are original and provocative. With a great deal of his argument one must unqualifiedly agree, although his final deductions are vitiated by the fanatical pacifism which colours his whole thought.

Mr. Heard develops the thesis, that the older school of evolutionists totally misunderstood "natural selection" and the "survival of the fittest"; that it is not the strong and the tough who survive through the æons of organic evolution, but the gentle and the meek. The dinosaurs were moving fortresses, armed like dreadnaughts for offence and defence, but they perished miserably, whereas, he argues, the obscure and tiny but more intelligent and adaptable ancestors of the mammals persisted into the Tertiary. The mammals in turn developed races of "imperialists", the Baluchitherium, the mammoth and the mastodon, the sabre-toothed tiger. The mammals who still thrive to-day are for the most part pygmies in comparison with the giants of the past, but they are sensitive, alert, awake. It is obvious to Mr. Heard and, we believe, to many others, that survival is not specifically reserved for those creatures which have sought security by means of undue specialization of their offensive and defensive functions, or which have sought relief from pain by becoming callous and numb. Two primary factors of success seem to be the ability to keep the organs and functions sufficiently generalized, and the retention and intensification of *sensitiveness*.

> Now that it seems clear that all Life has advanced only so far as it has retained sensitiveness, and that it has been destroyed when it has lost that power of feeling and suffering, we can see how such a Natural History makes a Natural Philosophy, and man's values show themselves to be no longer biologically immoral but a natural development of such a growing, essential power of feeling and finally of sympathy. Man has not to "defy the cosmic process"—certainly a hopeless and biologically unsound procedure.

[2] *The Source of Civilization*, by Gabriel Heard; Harper & Brothers, New York and London, 1937.

His task is consciously to avoid losing his power of feeling and awareness, to keep on casting the skin of his mind and the callus on his emotions, to avoid the danger of safety and security and to dare, to dare, and yet again to dare to understand and sympathize. . . . As we view life to-day, in the lightning-flash moment of self-consciousness, what we see then is all fishes, all amphibians, all reptiles, all mammals, except man, no longer progressing. The curve of their potentiality has ceased to rise. . . . Only one still climbs—man.

Parenthetically, we wonder whether anyone is competent to affirm without qualification that, in the real plan of Life, whatever it is, all fishes, etc. are classified as failures. What is Nature's definition of a failure?

The Loss of the Power of Co-operation

Mr. Heard is convinced that the same law of the survival of the meek and sensitive operates in the evolution of civilizations; that the calamities which visited the societies of the past and which threaten our own may be attributed to the appearance of violence and brutality in human relations. He insists, as if he had never heard of cannibals, that the vices which impel men to rob and murder one another are by-products of civilization. It is his theory that civilization suddenly "emerged" a few thousand years ago when "man made at one time somewhere in the Middle East an integrated series of discoveries which completely revolutionized his life". This "mutation" is alleged to have greatly accelerated man's mental development, and also to have made him for the first time conscious as an individual apart from a group. Up to that time, Mr. Heard thinks, men lived together in amity because their instinct to co-operate with one another was not inhibited by the development of personal self-consciousness which accompanies the growth of reason.

Our problem . . . is to see now at what stage of development man lost his inherent power of co-operation, and had to seek for some conscious way of preserving a complicated and elaborating society. It is clear that stage corresponds to the period in his psychic evolution when he attained self-consciousness. After that he must do deliberately what till then he had done without thought.

Yoga Versus the Police Power

Mr. Heard blames the Sumerians and the Egyptians for setting all their successors the example of trying to hold together their social organizations by the power of the sword, that is, by the police power, by using armed force to suppress the rebel within and to repel the enemy without. By contrast he points to the recently discovered civilization of Mohenjo Daro in the Indus Valley which, according to his very free interpretation of a few archæological data, was the principal source of the spiritual genius that has flowered through the centuries in India. The Indus culture, he imagines, succeeded where all others have failed, because its units were bound together not by physical force but by the practice of various forms of *yoga*, graduated in some way according to the caste and capacity of the citizens. It is not surprising that he should be a little indefinite as to the methods used, but his main argument is clear enough. "Yoga solves the problem of the self-divided individual, that of the individual

and society, and that of consciousness and Life and indeed the universe, through the single solution of making the individual learn how to achieve knowledge of his extra-individuality." It solves the problem of "the growing fissure between self-consciousness and the subconscious" in which, as he suggests, is buried the instinct or intuition which makes us aware of the fundamental unity of all souls. If *yoga* were universally practised, so Mr. Heard concludes, there would be no criminals and therefore no police, and in particular there would be no war, which Mr. Heard dislikes as completely as he misunderstands it. This, after all, is only another way of saying that what the world needs is to be converted from sin and self to God. With that, we most certainly agree.

Progress and Cyclic Law

It is evident that a general practice of real *yoga*, of real union with the divine source of human consciousness, would transform the earth. It is quite probable that the ultimate aim of the Great Lodge for humanity is to raise mankind to the point where such a practice will be as natural as any physical function. The traditions recorded in *The Secret Doctrine* actually confirm Mr. Heard's supposition that the first civilizations were united by *yoga*, though this Golden Age seems to have been centred elsewhere than in the "Middle East" and to have elapsed not a few thousand years but millions of years ago.

We live now, however, in *Kali Yuga*, the Age of Iron. The Morning Star has fallen into matter and corruption. *Yoga* no longer acts as a social binding force, and the "heresy of separateness" has taken its place. Such is the fact, and we must face it in order to learn what it means. In the first place, we may be certain that the real *Yogis*, the Lords of Karma, the Masters of the Great Lodge, would spread the teaching of true *yoga* far and wide in the world if any conceivable good could come of it. But it is only too obvious that men would use the teaching merely to turn it into a ghastly perversion. The proof of this is that the forms of *yoga* which are still prevalent in the world, like the *hatha yoga* and the tantric magic of modern India, are themselves ghastly perversions of the true. Does Mr. Heard understand what we conceive to be the first principle of the true *yoga*, that it unites the *yogi* not with the *subconsciousness* which is more or less common to all men, but with the *superconsciousness* which the Higher Self of man shares with his divine progenitors?

Before man can resume the practice of divine union, he must learn many simpler things. Both progress and catastrophe begin to be intelligible, if we adopt the hypothesis that civilizations as well as individuals die and reincarnate in response to the cyclic or rhythmic law which governs all processes in Nature. Periodically, without any beginning or end which can be conceived, the hidden and invisible are transformed into a nature which is manifest and visible, and again the manifest and visible are re-dissolved into the hidden and invisible. But is it not the special property of this Age of Iron in which we live, that all the seeds of our *alaya*, the best as well as the worst, have full opportunity for germination and growth? Even the normal man of the Golden Age which is past, was doubtless endowed with a goodness which we can scarcely imagine,

but the seed of unwisdom must have been within him, even if latent. We may assume that the normal man of the Golden Age which is in the future, will not only have increasingly incarnated his spiritual genius, but that in him unwisdom and the chain of *nidanas* will have "faded out" and ceased to be. We may be certain that no one will reincarnate to enjoy the felicity of that paradise, unless here and now he takes advantage of the fruition of unwisdom, of its full manifestation, deliberately uprooting it and casting it into the fire.

The slayer of unwisdom is sensitive, gentle, compassionate, but he cannot be a pacifist in the presence of evil. The spiritual man, he who embodies his proper genius, is of warrior caste. He wars first of all against his own lower self, but whenever Karma makes it possible, whenever it is his business, he defends those who are unjustly and brutally attacked; nor does he hesitate to take the sword against the enemies of the Spirit in man, because perchance he may die by the sword. A student of Theosophy is without excuse, if he be blind to the elementary distinction between righteous and unrighteous warfare. He cannot desire to acquire a "sensitiveness" which would make him incapable of laying down his life for a friend.

To be humble is to forget oneself at all times for others, without ever becoming aware of this self-forgetfulness.—LAVATER.

Some sleep when they should keep awake, and some forget when they should remember; and this is the very cause why often, at the resting-places, some pilgrims in some things come off losers.—BUNYAN.

FRAGMENTS

NOT long since Haru told me this story.

A soldier lay dying in the Moroccan desert. The fight, a mere skirmish, was over, the enemy beaten off, and the members of his troop had not found him in the place where he had fallen. The hot desert sand was under him, the pitiless desert sun beat on him where he lay. His wounds made every breath an agony, but a greater suffering still was his thirst. And he was alone.

But was he alone? No; through the fever and the pain and the mercifully increasing weakness, he felt a presence beside him. First it was like a shadow that warded him from the sun, then as a cool breath of air; and the coolness lay upon his mouth like water from a mountain stream, and he had a vision of snow-clad heights, and he heard the sound of the mountain torrent which seemed to wash over him and bathe his wounds. Then the sound of the water had a voice—O that voice! He could not hear what it said, he was far too weak for that; but it was healing and benediction, it was the love of all his loved ones mingled together, but above and beyond anything he had ever known before. After that strong arms pillowed his head, and the voice came closer and closer until he fell asleep in wonder and perfect peace.

So he woke up presently in heaven, that soldier, in his heaven, where was all he had ever longed for. But he was dissatisfied. "Give me", he said, "the desert sands, and the burning sun, and the wounds and the thirst, that I may have again that presence beside me and hear that voice—that voice is what I want, and what it was saying to me that I do not know." And so, Haru told me, he broke through, out of his heaven, so great was his desire for that which he had lost, and he found the Master who had ministered to him.

Meanwhile his comrades, searching for it, came upon his body, and marvelled at the look of rapture stamped upon its face. They brought it home for reverent burial, and grieved at his sad end—so young, and full of promise (how could they know!), and some at home grieved long.

Thus it is that things look one way this side Earth, and another way beyond it.

CAVÉ.

YOU

From Ptolemy to Copernicus

I

YOU are, indisputably, the most illuminating object that you can choose from the whole universe for your attention and study. There is no other thing that it is so important for you to understand, none other that you can observe more intimately, none that you already know so much about, yet none where your knowledge is so inadequate—where wider horizons open upon vaster tracts of unexplored and untraversed country.

It does not in the least matter whether you like or dislike yourself, you have none the less to live with yourself, "with, from, in, and by", yourself, the whole ablative case. Nor do you escape from yourself in any of the other cases. Indeed some preliminary notion of the extent of yourself, as a subject for reflection, may be gained by running through the declension of yourself: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative and vocative, as well as ablative. Of what verbs, transitive and intransitive, are you the subject? Of what are you possessive? Of what are you the origin? What comes to you? What sort of things, for example, do people talk to you about? And why? What acts upon and affects you? How do you comport yourself as object, not subject; when you are the anvil, not the hammer? (And how about the negatives of these questions? What does *not* affect you? And why?) How do you address yourself? To what form of call do you respond? What accompanies you? What goes from you? What dwells in you? What environment, mental, physical and moral, have you made for yourself, or accepted as yours?

You are the centre of your universe. As you move, the horizon moves—the boundary between the visible and the invisible. You are always in the exact middle of things. There, from the very point where you stand, radiate all the directions of space, north and south and east and west and up and down. Where you are, there, at that precise instant of time, is the juncture of "the past" with "the future", linked through the mystery of "the present". That mystery is with you always, wherever you go, wherever you look. In you all opposites link and are conjoined. In you their opposition comes to a head. You are at once subject and object, actor and acted upon, thinker and thing thought, concrete actuality and unrealized potentiality, good and evil, variable and unchanging, wise and foolish, bound and free, naked and revealed to all the world, yet clothed about and hidden even from yourself. To attempt to enumerate the contradictions and antinomies you present, is to face a list worse than Whitman's observations from a ferryboat, or Homer's catalogue of ships, which even pedagogues permit the student to skip; but here you cannot skip them, for they are of your very nature, and at every moment you have to deal with

them. How, then, is self-knowledge possible in the face of such contradictions? What are you to make of these congeries of opposites?

The answer is simple. You are to make yourself of them,—recognize that you *are* made of them, that you are always in the middle of things, linking dissimilars, linking opposites.

You have always known this about yourself. It is part of the primary data of everyone's everyday observation, and all of these data are so familiar that they no longer excite the naïve wonder and inquiry which they deserve, and which are a sure road to increased self-knowledge. It does not matter with what fact of observation you begin, or how you reflect upon it. When you stand on a primary fact, you are like a man standing at the north pole: to move at all is to move south. Only after you have made your initial move, do other directions become possible to you. You cannot even go wrong, until you go. Begin, therefore, to go. Consider at random, just as they occur to you, some of the obvious and immediate consequences of the marvellous central position you perceive yourself to occupy in this miraculous universe. For example:

First, no matter what adjective you apply to yourself, it is only half a truth. You may equally apply the opposite. It appears a futile undertaking, therefore, to seek self-knowledge through adjectives. Instead of gratifying your vanity by contemplating your wisdom, or relieving your feelings by objurgating your unwisdom, you will best serve truth by keeping in mind that you are at a point where wisdom is on one side and unwisdom on the other, and that you link the two.

Second, there is no adjective which does not apply to you, no quality with which you are not in contact. This means that there is no quality, no power, in all the universe, upon which you may not draw.

Third, you are equally your past and your future, for you link the two. It is impossible to overemphasize the practical importance and potency of this realization. You are not only the trivial and contemptible thing you have exhibited to the world in these past years, you are equally the secret aspirations of your inmost heart, the as yet unmanifested potentialities of the far, far distant future. All you would like to be you *are*, and there is nothing at all to prevent your claiming this aspect of yourself and *acting upon it*. You may begin from this moment, and end the false concept of yourself which you have permitted to paralyse you.

Fourth, "Begin"? "End"? These words contrast with the fundamental perception that you are always in the middle of everything, always linking what has been with what is to be. What can a "beginning" or "ending" mean to you? To what, in your actual experience, do they apply?

They certainly do not apply to you yourself. You have nowhere in your consciousness a memory of a beginning to your own being—nor of an end to it. So far as you believe it had a beginning or will have an end, your belief is either assumption or inference. It is not, and cannot be, a primary fact of observation. Professor Hocking has recently called attention to the fact that if there ever had been a beginning to your being, a first instant of consciousness which

thus had a future but no past, it would, by this fact, have been a totally different kind of instant from that which you now know as linking the past and future. So far as the naïve facts of your own experience testify, you must *have been* in order *to be*. In like manner, *to be* involves *continuing to be*. You need not lean too heavily upon this argument. You have followed it sufficiently if you realize that "beginnings" and "endings" are artificial importations into any consideration of your own being,—importations drawn, it would appear, from your notions of the external world.

Thus you say a river "begins" in a lake and "ends" in the ocean; school "begins" at nine o'clock and "ends" at three. But as a matter of fact the lake is fed by springs, and these by rain, and the rain is the descent of water drawn by the sun from the ocean. Thus your thought of a beginning and ending for the river is really the result of an artificial limiting of your attention to a mere section of a process that is actually circular, without beginning or end. Similarly with school: it *re*-opens at nine o'clock, and does but *suspend* its formal sessions at three. There is all the home work to be done after three; all the preparation that came before nine. Nowhere have you ever met a first session of a first school, or a last session of a last school, neither a real beginning nor a real ending to school. It is clear that you often give the name of a "beginning" to what can be identified as an emergence from the invisible (like the river from underground springs); or as recurring cycles or reincarnations of previous existences (like the school). Behind or within every beginning or ending is something which does not begin or end.

In these last reflections you have taken more than one step away from your stand upon the primary data of observation of yourself; and though, as we have seen, the first step must be right, the second may be wrong, and therefore all that you should here assert with positiveness is that you are faced with certain questions, which you may note for your fifth point as follows:

Fifth, what in yourself and your life is without beginning or end? And what is the real nature of what appears as beginnings and endings? Do you habitually, or even once in a very long while, seek to discern between the mortal and the immortal as they enter into your own experience? And is there any more important discrimination that you can think of to practise?

Random samplings such as these—haphazard reflections upon a single primary fact of observation—may suggest how rich is the field for exploration which your own being offers; but only as they are co-ordinated can they give you true self-knowledge, enabling you to turn haphazard living into the science or conscious art of life. The best they do in themselves is to give you bits of self-information. As you co-ordinate these bits of information, you make knowledge of them. As you use this knowledge, consciously and deliberately, in your conduct, you deepen it into experience and lift experience to consciousness, so that both knowledge and experience are ready and available as wisdom for the guiding of your will. Your problem is, therefore, not only the gaining of self-information, but also the co-ordinating of it into self-knowledge.

It should not surprise you if this, at first, appear complicated and difficult.

How could it be otherwise when your being is so manifold and rich? You have been made in the "image" of God. You are the "microcosm" of the Macrocosm, the "atom" in which the whole universe integrates itself, the "heir of all the ages". Even when you are the heir to a single member of a single generation—the storybook uncle whom you never knew, but who leaves you all his possessions—you expect to encounter complications. When you open his desk you are confronted with a mass of miscellaneous papers to which (not having known your uncle) you have no clue,—old maps, old title-deeds, old mortgages, old accounts of receipts and expenditures, insurance policies, bills of sale and exchange, correspondence acrimonious and friendly, names you have never heard and of whose possessors you know nothing, save that they are obviously implicated in your inheritance. You take these papers up, one by one, and do not know where to put them down again. Your great need is for some idea of their relation to one another, some scheme for classifying and filing them, so that related things may be brought into their fitting relations and help to interpret one another. You face the same sort of situation, and the same immediate need, when you make your first serious effort to examine your heritage from "the ages". You find charts, but you are not sure to what they are charts; title-deeds to vast possessions and high powers, compromised by manifold mortgages to old self-indulgences, so that you cannot tell what equity remains, receipts and expenditures from sources and for ends you are not able to identify. Your pressing need is for an intelligent filing system, a summary inventory of the estate, which will enable you to order the chaos of uncorrelated facts.

Fortunately, such a system is ready at hand to all students of Theosophy. In its teaching you have a skeleton plan into which you can fit the separate bits of self-information as your observation of yourself yields them to you. It gives you the colours and the outline of the completed picture of the jig-saw puzzle with which you are working, and one by one, as you pick the pieces up, it enables you to identify them and to put them in their proper place. Thus, if you have had your Theosophy in mind, you have recognized that the basic fact, some of whose consequences we sampled—the fact of observation that you were always in the middle of things, linking opposites—was but an illustration of the first fundamental principle of the Secret Doctrine, that the unity of Being, of your being and of the universe, can manifest itself only through duality.

Theosophy, whatever else it is describing, is always describing you,—your heritage and nature, your possibilities and powers, your fate and future. That is what its doctrine of correspondences necessitates. "As above, so below." The "seven principles of man" are your seven principles, seven aspects under which to view and classify the activity and phenomena of your own daily (and eternal) life. The "rounds and races", the cycles of evolution through which humanity as a whole has passed, are reproduced, and can be traced as clearly, in your own individual and conscious development. The Mahayugas, of Pralaya and Manvantara, are imaged in the alternation of your nights and days. When you leave your office in the afternoon, and return again in the morning, you are following a miniature cycle which, on its own plane and in its own way, reflects

the greater cycle of reincarnation through death and birth. All that Theosophy tells you of the latter can be translated into terms of the former, and there identified. In their correspondences, watching the transformations that take place in the "complex" of mood and thought and will which is uppermost in your personal consciousness, you can parallel, in your own first-hand observation, the teaching of the separation of the principles at death, the fading out of some, the consolidation of others, the assimilation of experience, the return to "incarnation", and the gathering of the skandhas that await you on the threshold. The greetings of your office staff, the mail upon your desk, the temper that you bring to the new day's work, all set before you lessons of Karma. The "little", which each hour's experience reveals within yourself, is of one piece with the "Great". The little is the apex of a cone which broadens to the Great without limit as it rises, as an electric spark is a thunder bolt in miniature.

The Cosmogenesis and Anthropogenesis of Theosophy are thus equally your genesis, and Theosophy gives you the clue or scheme you need in order to co-ordinate and make an intelligible whole of your separate and fragmentary observations of yourself. It places in your hands an inventory of the estate, and shows you what you must do to enter into your inheritance.

II

"To enter into your inheritance." "Heir of the Ages." To the man in the street such phrases seem mere literary figures of speech when applied to his ordinary human nature. But for you, to whom self-observation and Theosophy unite to bring self-knowledge, they have a concrete and personal significance, behind which loom momentous questions that you are beginning to perceive, and that must sooner or later be faced. For with knowledge comes responsibility, and once you have become conscious of anything, it can never again be with you as though you were unconscious of it. To "forget" is not the same as not to have known, and you cannot even forget at will. No small part of the tragedy of life is caused by the fact that when you are dealing with consciousness and knowledge, you are dealing with irreversible processes. But you may turn this fact equally to your advantage, and use it to confirm a resolution which might otherwise waver and fail. The insight which you have gained closes certain doors behind you, even as it opens others. There can be no going back to what was possible for you in ignorance. Having learned of your heritage, you must either claim or reject it. Your way lies forward.

Consider further, therefore, what is involved in any inheritance, the acquiring of any possessions, be they small or great. To whatever extent you make them yours, to a corresponding extent you become attached to them. If you have a dog on a chain, he also has you on a chain, and just what that connection is going to mean may depend upon the end from which it is viewed, and whether you or the dog is the stronger. There is no right without its duty, no possession without its obligation. That is a consequence of the duality which, as you saw, entered into all the manifested universe, though its application to possessions has been obscured by the present-day tendency to consider these merely in terms

of money—which, if they only had it, the thoughtless assume, they could spend as they chose, without responsibility or accountability to anyone. It is a grave error, for money is a power, and you are accountable to Divine Law for the use you make of every power; but it need not concern you now, for it is quite clear that your heritage from "the ages" is not something fluid and free, like money, but something which, like real estate, is involved in manifold ways by old and present usage, and which requires constant upkeep. To come into possession of such real estate, means that, as its master, you become obligated to represent or meet its needs, responsible for it. You can fulfil that responsibility or neglect it, but you cannot be without it. You can never be unconscious of the fact that your actions must now be viewed in the light of this responsibility, and not only from the standpoint of your personal will or whim. You can no longer refer everything to the single centre of yourself. There is another point, outside yourself, to which reference must be made; and whereas at the one point, the centre in yourself, you appeared free to do as you chose, it is clear that at the other point, in the responsibility for your inheritance, your personal preferences are quite without pertinence. There you must act not for yourself, but for the estate,—in a representative, not a personal capacity.

It is no light matter, therefore, to awake to the realization that you, in actual fact, are the heir to far-reaching powers and possessions. The difference it must make in your life is clear enough when the powers are political or the possessions physical. It is one thing to be Mr. FitzAlan-Howard. It is another to come into the title as Duke of Norfolk, premier duke and earl, responsible for some 50,000 acres of English land. Benjamin Franklin, as representative of the American Colonies in London, or as United States Minister at Paris, could not act and speak as though he were merely a private citizen of Philadelphia. But the most radical and momentous difference between the new state and the old is the profound metaphysical and philosophic difference between one and two,—which is, in essence, the difference between the unmanifest and the manifest; between consciousness limited to self, and consciousness open to all Being. In complete self-centredness, you have, as you saw, but one point for reference, whereas in accepted responsibility for any possession you have another; and these *two points* give you a *line of reference*, which one point does not, and thus give meaning to *direction*, and enable you to determine directions and to guide your life. To complete self-centredness not even conscience is possible; but once you care for any other thing than self, or assume responsibility, and straightway conscience walks beside you, go where you will. Perhaps in this you glimpse something of the purpose of *ex*istence, of the going out of Being which is the manifested universe, and will see, too, how the conditions of everyday, workaday, human life—a man's need to earn his bread by toil, his job, his wife and children—all act to take him out of self and to lead him to his heritage of the Spirit.

III

Does it seem strange that, starting from the perception that you are always at the centre of your universe, you should have been led to see that the great

desideratum for yourself and for all men is a centre other than yourself? That you can gain direction for your life only by subordinating it? It is part of the paradox of duality from which nothing in manifestation can escape. Turn back once more to that initial apprehension of yourself as linking opposites. Of what order and nature were those opposites? Were they peculiar to you? Were they personal or universal?

There were, for example, the divisions of time and space. You make your own division; but time and space themselves are not peculiar to you. Where you are, determines what is past and future, what is up and down, or east and west, for you. But time and space are shared by all men. You link the flesh and the Spirit, with their powers and limitations. You determine the point of linkage; but is the Spirit or the flesh limited to you? Can there be such a thing as a personal truth, one which permits of proprietary rights? If it be yours in the exclusive sense, if you own it or created it or invented it, can it be true? Is not the Spirit one? Is there not "one mind common to all individual men", into which and into all of which all individual minds are inlets, and all men have access? Or if you look to your body, in what sense is it "yours"? The evolutionists will tell you that it has been slowly developed through generation after generation of lives. Theosophy tells you the same, but shows you how it has been developed—the flesh having been slowly drawn up by the action of the Spirit incarnating and reincarnating, to manifest itself more and more completely in vehicles it fashions to that end.

In truth, what you call yourself and consider personal, is but what you draw from the universal. As a plant lives and grows where earth and air and water meet and receive the light and heat of the sun, so do you live and grow through the conjunction of universals. That which you deem most intimate and personal—as your sense of selfhood or your capacity to transcend self in love—is, in fact, most universal. Inanimate things touch each other on their peripheries, but animate beings meet in their central core, where lives the divine spark that makes them animate.

Appeal still again to self-observation. Look into your own being, examine all your attributes and qualities, all the pairs of opposites conjoined in you, and ask of each: Is this my Self? To each such question you will have to answer: No; these things clothe the Self, cluster around the Self, show forth and hide the Self; but the Self, itself, lies above and beyond them. Nowhere short of the Supreme can you find the Self. Your own Being gives you these answers; but so does the Being of all men. In these questions you have been following an age-old catechism, set forth equally in the *Upanishads* and in *The Cloud of Unknowing*, in the dialogues between Krishna and Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gîta*, and by Dionysius the Areopagite in his treatise *On Divine Names*. But it is only half the chêla's catechism. The other half is to acknowledge that all things come from the Supreme, that naught is foreign to the Self. Thus Krishna reveals himself to Arjuna: "I am the Self . . . dwelling inwardly in all beings; Verily I am the beginning, and the middle, and the end also of beings . . . I am the word of those that speak . . . I am all consuming Death; I am the

birth of things that shall be, I am honour, grace, voice among things feminine; and memory and wisdom and firmness and patience . . . the fire of the fiery; I am victory and decision; I am the goodness of the good."

So, too, Dionysius tells us that the Divine Names, like the angels in Jacob's vision, mount the ladder from earth to heaven, through detachment and negation of the things of earth, but descend from heaven to earth in affirmation of the divine essence of all things that are—which earth too often thinks its own.

In little and in great your being reveals this truth. There is nothing in you that is not drawn from the Divine; nothing in you, which, having been drawn and limited and stamped with your separate, personal stamp, is not, by that fact, set over against the Divine as something from which you must detach yourself if you would rise to the Supreme. For you, too, must mount the ladder to heaven, rung by rung, reaching up to the one above only to leave it behind you as it is attained. Each good, to which you now aspire as an end, can remain a good only as it becomes a means through which you pass, and which you leave behind for the greater good that it makes visible beyond. In that characteristic you have an unfailing hallmark of the Spirit, in the contemplation of which a new meaning may emerge for you as to that ceaseless adoration which is the office of the heavenly host,—their unremitting outpouring of themselves in love and worship of the Eternal Godhead, constituting the dynamic power that moves all the worlds and the whole process of manifestation.

In the inspiration that quickens your will to action, in the truth which moves your thought to speech, Spirit descends anew into matter, to reveal itself, and to reveal, too, that it transcends its revelation. At first hand, within your own consciousness, you may watch the whole process of incarnation by which it clothes and manifests itself in the familiar symbols of your experience. Thus clothed and manifested, you have, in thoughtless presumption, called it yours; but it is yours only as a responsibility and trust are yours. It is something which commands you, not something which you can command. You have no power to affect Truth, but only to be affected by it. It is it, not you, that must be master. To accept title to the gifts of the Spirit, to enter into your divine inheritance and estate, you must, in turn, give yourself to it. You must serve it; not ask that it should serve you, nor think that you can any longer be free merely to serve yourself. The centre of your life lies now beyond you.

IV

There is no mental habit which will defeat self-knowledge more surely than that of using words without clear recognition of the meaning you attach to them; for this habit substitutes words for things, and thus takes your inquiries out of the world of facts into the world of shadows. Be quite sure, therefore, that you know just what you mean when you use such phrases as "centre of consciousness", or "centre of your life". You are, obviously, not using centre in a spatial or physical sense. Perhaps, if you were, you might hold that your centre of consciousness was physically situated in your brain, so that you looked out level through your eyes. But you can think this only if you imagine your

head as a hollow dome; you cannot really picture your consciousness, or any centre of selfhood, as located in a kind of blood-soaked sponge which is your brain; and you must ultimately reject any physical location for it. Certainly there has been no thought of physical location in the way you have used "centre" here. You have been looking, instead, to something in the world of sentiment and thought, as you might say that a mother "centred" her life in her children. You would mean by this, not only that they were her dominant interest and concern, but also that it was to them, and to their welfare, that she automatically referred everything else. She would instinctively look at life from their standpoint and see it in terms of what would be advantageous or prejudicial to them. They would be her *centre of reference*.

To say, therefore, that "the centre of your life now lies beyond you", is to say that you no longer automatically look at things and events from the standpoint of self, but from a standpoint beyond self, and as they may affect something beyond your personal affairs. The result is a transformation and simplification of outlook comparable to the change from Ptolemaic to Copernican astronomy, when the sun, instead of the earth, was made the centre of reference. It involved no change in the observed facts. The stars and planets still rose and set in their accustomed places, still were to be found in the courses charted for them ages before. But those charts could now be redrawn, not as complicated by being viewed from a moving, variable earth, but with reference to the central sun, which draws and holds the earth and all the planets, and which itself ranks with the "fixed" stars. In such reference, what had been the complicated interweaving of cycles and epicycles, with cusps and nodes that represented inexplicable approaches and recessions in the planetary paths, became such ordered revolutions round the sun as the earth itself described. It was a far simpler system, and in that, at least, more beautiful.

So can your own life become more simple and more beautiful. It is far simpler and far better to ask what is right, than what is expedient; what is just, rather than what you would like; to move in obedience to a gravitation that is the law of heaven, rather than to attempt to make others revolve around yourself. You will see your fellow-man more truly when you trace his course in reference to the Eternal Verities, instead of in relation to your own temporal position; when you value him for what he can do for the Theosophical Movement and the Great Lodge of Masters, rather than for his capacity to promote your personal preferment, or for the favour or disfavour he shows to you.

But to make the astronomical parallel a true one, you will have to go beyond the common, limited and materialistic view of the Copernican theory, which pictures the sun as though it were but that focus of physical matter which is seen in the sky, separated from the earth by vast distance. Instead of this, you must recognize that the sun is, in fact, the whole globe of its radiating, life-giving, life-sustaining, light and heat and subtile magnetism, within which radiant globe the whole earth's orbit is. The failure to recognize this has obscured the profound philosophical significance of the Copernican view, which shows man to be a denizen of the sun no less than of the earth, and which thus,

quite literally, reveals to him his inheritance in a whole new world which he had not thought of as his. In like manner, when your self-knowledge has brought you to see that the centre of your life lies in the Divine Life above you, that Centre will be known to you, not as distant, but as embracing, surrounding and vivifying you, even as the sun embraces and vivifies the earth, and a new world will open to you. Nor is the newly recognized Centre of that new world a mere abstract point of Spiritual Being, a mere focus whence radiates Spiritual force; it has also a being like your own human being,—even as the sun has a physical core. Your Centre is your Master. It is in his dual nature, which is both human and divine. From this point on, your self-study must pass into study of him. In his being is personified all that should now rule, and in time become personified, in yours. His radiance surrounds and supports your every movement. He is your link with the Supreme, the only Self you can desire to serve or have. He is your Way, your Truth, your Life. In him you live and move and have your being. And yet—he is more human than you, in that his humanity is divine.

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

When a man opposes me, he awakes my attention, not my anger. . . . The cause of truth ought to be the common cause of both of us.—MONTAIGNE.

Nothing can keep you,—not fate, nor health, nor admirable intellect; none can keep you, but rectitude only, rectitude for ever and ever!—EMERSON.

TEMPTATION

THOSE of us who would really meditate must surely confess that it is the most difficult, nerve-racking, heart-rending task we ever attempted (I speak only of and for neophytes). When that oft-evaded hour arrives when the subject should be our sins, do not all beginners find themselves pronouncing easy absolution at this point or that, or am I the only one? It is without doubt the easiest way to meditate on sin. In the obvious surface sense we do not steal or lie,—at least we do not steal; we are not envious —though perhaps?—*no*, positively we are not envious; we very certainly (and this is a pet absolution) are not and never have been cruel. Toward this particular enormity we can take the attitude of a detached archangel with a lorgnette,—which is the signal for suspicion to awake. If we are brave enough and honest enough to push past this homemade and spurious comfort, a strange and daunting experience awaits us—thus I have been told and thus I have found. At this point, if the angels are looking out for us, we may hear behind us a vague murmur—a still small voice—but looking back we see no burning bush, no following Shepherd, no indulgent friend. Quiet though the voice, it is that of indictment and not of absolution. We see a long horrific road stretching back into the guilty past, and down it, dogging our complacent steps, limp the victims of our persistent cruelty—those piteous ghosts, our own creation and no other. Flash-light after flash-light turns on them as they pass—"All the dead that ever I knew, going one by one and two by two"—and ours to watch and remember. Sleeping memories awake and rush backward like a reversed moving picture. Is it possible that we exclaimed to tremulous age so soon to leave us: "Must you lose your spectacles forty times a day?" Let the saddening of that kind tired face be your retribution now. Need we have snubbed that excited baby rushing with a flower—"It is nothing but a horrid weed—throw it away." Here is the maid from whose white exhaustion we demanded that last effort. And here the impertinent shop-worker, worn to the verge of hysteria and carried over it by our insistence. And the little dressmaker who spoilt the dress while fighting weary discouragement, and for whom our chilly civility was harder to bear than a good honest scolding. It is possible to be a monster of cruelty without wiping off that benevolent smirk. Truly, "the sins of each of us have blackened the faces of those about us".

Such a vision is a terrible experience, and fortunate are we if it come early, that our spiritual effort may be made from a basis of shrewd self-distrust; for it takes much honesty, humour and common-sense to obey the injunction "know thyself". The hymn says, "Thy kind and searching glance can scan the very wounds that shame would hide". Great love is implied in the insistence that we scan with Him—that we push past the small lapses, the venialities we are so complacently ready to answer for,—the "Oh yes, I know I

have my faults", and begin to know that we also have our crimes. If we harbour within us every potentiality of evil—and don't we?—the sooner we develop a spiritual inferiority complex the better, and ruthless courage in meditation is the royal path,—the surest way to keep that "I am not as others" out of our convictions,—the only way to save ourselves from battening on comfortable lies. Then, turning to the Master, one can say, "I do not begin to suspect how bad I am, but You know. Disclose me to myself with loving caution or I shall perish of despair."

Once I had a dear funny brother. He passed through life, as so many of his countrymen do, with a jocular avoidance of the deep places of life, which only served to prove to those who loved him his unreconciled awareness of them. In his case the jocularity was so witty, and the avoidance so sensitive, that love thrived on them. We faced many trials together and now and again our eyes met with mutual recognition—"another storm", "a new exile", "a fresh heartbreak"; and in his imposed silence we met the weather. He had been a brilliant student, piling up honours and honourable mentions while still very young. In middle life he said to me with characteristic gravity under the fun —"Do you know I thought I was an infant prodigy till I was forty, then I suddenly came to and realized that I was only a fairly good run-of-the-mill engineer after all." It is easy to repeat this error on the spiritual plane. In this great surge of new life we ride high upon emotion and we mistake entertainment for growth. Many of us never "come to" on any plane, and we need not linger here over the horrors of that complacency. Adolescence is easily convinced of supremacy, and although a sense of humour and a frank family will work miraculous cures for the lucky, those who remain in their trance will torment us from the cradle to the grave with the poor fit of their assumptions. They need to meditate, and that is the one thing they will never do.

With wondering awe one turns to the world's great classical meditation on temptation. For forty days and forty nights the Master fasted and was "an hungred", and then the devil—a genius in the choice of times and seasons—came, and tempted Him, and was ignominiously worsted. He was "tempted in all things like as we are, yet without sin". We can never again say that no one understands us—He understands us—He drained the cup that every lip must touch, and flung it contemptuously away.

The strange story must mean just what it says, and temptation is not merely a malicious soliciting to evil. One said to me, "Don't speak of the Lord's Prayer, I detest it! Imagine to yourself a loving father deliberately 'leading' his children into temptation"; and I knew that though I had given some love to that prayer, I had given little thought. The Lord's Prayer is humanity's prayer, for all sorts and conditions of men; it means one thing for you and another for me; it speaks for the child, the sinner, and the saint; for the chêla, the Mahatma, and, I suspect, for the Dhyan Chohan. The neophyte cries, "Take the gentle way, O Lord. Remember that I am but dust." The saint welcomes with courage the trial of his faith, and the chêla "thinks it all joy" to be led into temptation. A great reward is promised to these—"the

trial of your faith worketh patience"—patience with life, with others, with oneself.

The temptation in the wilderness was very real. We read, not of the haughty repudiation of evil by a great spiritual being, but of a man, and a starving man at that, "tempted like as we are". Those unhesitating answers came in a whisper but they came like pistol shots. The devil must have been astonished with a great astonishment. A starving man to refuse the bread-line, a man down and out, to spurn the heady draught of lower psychic supremacy! Then he remembered the predestined mission of the man before him—that in the long future He was to "take up His Power and reign", and he was clever enough to make use of the Man's own holy dream. "Why wait for ignominy and death and weary cycles of defeat? Worship me, and your dream is realized and the kingdoms of the earth are yours." Not otherwise have the Hitlers and the Mussolinis of all time been lured. But now the Master's tone changes. He utters a short sharp speech of dismissal as to an impertinent subordinate, "Get thee behind me, Satan". The rest is beautiful. We hear the rhythmic beat of great wings, and the stony place is splendid with angels. With ineffable tenderness, with love unspeakable, "they minister unto Him".

L.S.

"She is an awful trial", said the Boy.
"I believe it", said the Man; "so is God."—Book of Memories.

Have no unreasonable expectations where others are concerned. The ass can never forgive the rose-bush for not bearing thistles.—T. Pesch.

WITHOUT CENSOR

X.

UPON completion of the St. Mihiel operation, the First American Army held a front from the Moselle River to a point southeast of Verdun. In preparation for the second great American offensive on the Meuse-Argonne front, this line was extended, first to the north of Verdun, and then to the western edge of the Argonne Forest. This gave the First American Army a front of ninety-four miles, or, as General Pershing has pointed out, about one-third of the active part of the line from the North Sea to the Moselle. At the same time that the First American Army attacked on this new front, offensives by the British and French Armies between us and the Sea were to take place, each army driving forward as rapidly as possible. The general plan of this united Allied offensive contemplated advances at indicated points, which would form salients in the enemy's line. These salients would threaten his forces, then exposed on the flanks, and would compel their withdrawal to new lines in the rear, after which the Allied operations would be repeated. There was to be no respite for the enemy. The object of the Allied High Command was to force him, through a series of sledgehammer blows along that long line, either to scatter his reserves and so to weaken his general defence, or to concentrate his reserves at vital points and so greatly to endanger the remainder of his line. The most vital point of all was his chief artery of supply, his main railroad line, which ran through Carignan, Sedan and Mézières, and which paralleled his front. It was essential, in order to maintain his Armies in Northeastern France, that he should keep this railroad intact and in his possession. As long as he could hold at this point, Allied offensives to the west, even if successful, would not necessarily be conclusive. If, however, this main line of communication and supply should be broken, he would lose his hold on all territory occupied in Northern France, and if it should be broken before he had withdrawn his Armies from France and from Belgium, he would be entirely unable either to supply or to evacuate them, and his rout would be complete. He must hold at all costs at the eastern end of his long line, and he knew it. It was this key point, this pivot of the whole German line to the Sea—the Sedan-Carignan railroad—which was the objective of the First American Army, and it was opposite the front of the First Army that the enemy ultimately concentrated his remaining strongest divisions and displayed the most tenacious and desperate resistance.[1]

The terrain opposite the front of the First American Army was ideal for defensive fighting, and with a full realization of this and of the paramount

[1] It should be understood that each of the Allied armies—American, British, French—may have been inclined in retrospect to believe that the German resistance on its front was more tenacious and desperate than elsewhere; and that the American army was not backward in this respect, either in thinking or declaring it.—EDITORS.

importance of making their line of communication practically impregnable, the Germans had busied themselves, during their long occupancy of this sector, in strengthening its natural advantages by an elaborate and complete series of field fortifications. Their main permanent defensive positions consisted of four lines, which extended from in front of Metz along the entire Western Front; these lines were widely separated opposite Paris, but they converged and were relatively close together in front of the German line of interior communications which was now the American objective. Along the entire Meuse-Argonne front the enemy had the advantage of numerous commanding positions from which he could pour cross artillery fire on an attacking force and enfilade it, and the many woods and forests constituted natural defences as well. In addition, he had built innumerable dugouts and concrete machine-gun emplacements, and had dug successive lines of intermediate trenches extending from his front lines back to his main defensive positions, while everywhere he had further strengthened himself with masses of barbed-wire entanglements. The Boche knew that he must resist to the last at this vital point, if it was ever threatened, and he had made his dispositions accordingly.

The First American Army was to attack in conjunction with General Gouraud's Fourth French Army on the left, and this joint offensive was based upon the same strategical principle as that of the general Allied offensive. The two Armies joined at the Argonne Forest. A thrust, for instance, by our First Army east of the Forest, by threatening the left flank of the enemy's position in front of the Fourth French Army, would force his retirement at that point. It was identically the same principle—that of forcing salients into the enemy's lines and so exposing him to attack on his flanks—which was employed locally on the entire First Army front as well in overcoming strong enemy resistance points, which could not hold out when our troops had passed them on the flanks and continued to drive onward. The successive movements forward, whether of the various Army Corps within the First Army, or of the First Army and of the Fourth French Army acting in conjunction, would have the inevitable effect of forcing a withdrawal of hostile resistance and of throwing the enemy back. This strategical principle proved successful in the actual conduct of the offensive itself, although impeded and delayed from time to time by the strength of the enemy resistance and by other factors as well.

The new front of the First American Army had been held for some time by the Second French Army, with Headquarters at Souilly, on the Sacred Road that led to Verdun, and in our take-over of the area and in our preliminary reconnaissance of the enemy positions, we were greatly assisted by the Second French Army Staff, which knew all of the Boche dispositions, and concealed strong points, from its long experience in this area. The French helped us, too, in the earlier movement of American troops into the new battle area, while we were still occupied at St. Mihiel. This troop movement of ours was a staff operation of considerable magnitude, and was carried out with great skill and secrecy (up to the opening of the attack, the Boche still thought that our next major drive would be against Metz) and was the subject of favourable and

even enthusiastic comment on the part of the British and French. In view of the fact that the jump-off for the Meuse-Argonne offensive took place just fourteen days after the start of the St. Mihiel operation, and that some of the divisions which participated in the earlier battle were used again at once, this favourable comment was not undeserved. Our concentration for the Meuse-Argonne operation involved the movement of three army corps headquarters with their corps troops, of fifteen divisions, and of several thousand army troops. Approximately 600,000 American troops were moved into the First Army sector, and, as in the St. Mihiel operation, all troop movements were made at night, either by rail, by motor transport or by marching. When the movement, in addition, of supplies, ammunition, and hospital equipment is considered, over roads and railway lines that were entirely inadequate for the conduct of operations on such a scale, our effort showed without question that the First Army Staff had been learning rapidly under the pressure of immediate necessity, and had developed in a short time a high degree of efficiency. This was due in large measure to the character of the men on the First Army Staff. They recognized their own inexperience, and from the first had sought advice and instruction from the French, who had learned from years of fighting, and the handling of huge armies, the very things our officers needed and were anxious to know.

In an earlier article it was possible to comment briefly upon the strategical aspect of the St. Mihiel operation, and even to give some account of the tactical working out of the actual battle itself. This was possible because, even allowing for local operations at the end when the line was stabilized, the battle was not prolonged for more than five days. But the Meuse-Argonne offensive is another story. It is not possible, it is not within the scope of a series of articles such as these, to describe in detail a battle which lasted for forty-seven days; which consisted of two distinct successive operations and of five separate phases; and which involved a battle front of twenty-four miles in length,—a battle in which the First American Army, consisting at one time of over one million men, penetrated thirty-two miles to the North and fourteen miles to the North-east before the Armistice terminated hostilities; a battle in which the enemy, throwing in against our troops his picked divisions, in order to defend his vital point on the Western Front, finally brought against our First Army one-fourth of his entire remaining strength; a battle which so forced him to make use of all his remaining resources that the German delegates, who came to Marshal Foch to beg for an Armistice, told him that they no longer had any divisions in reserve, that every division that they had was actually in line. It is not possible here to describe military operations of such magnitude. They are a matter of history, they are on record elsewhere. I shall only add, in order to emphasize the relative size of this military effort of ours, a brief comparison of the First American Army in this operation with the Union Army in the Wilderness Campaign in our Civil War. In our First Army, in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, a total of 1,200,000 Americans were engaged, together with 140,000 French under American command, while approximately 2417 guns were employed.

The total strength of the Union Army at the Wilderness was 148,834 men, and approximately 300 guns were used. The actual weight of the ammunition fired in the Meuse-Argonne offensive was greater than that used by the entire Union forces during the four years of the Civil War.

A day or two after the completion of the St. Mihiel operation, General Drum sent for me and told me that, in preparation for the conduct of the offensive, Headquarters First Army was about to open an Advance Post of Command at Souilly. He said that the main Headquarters would continue to function at Ligny-en-Barrois until this operation on the Meuse-Argonne front had been completed, after which, I gathered, the First Army was to conduct another offensive further to the West. Apparently at that time our High Command did not anticipate that it would be necessary to devote more than two or three weeks to the operations on the Meuse-Argonne front. Obviously, as those operations proceeded, as difficulties developed, and as the stubborn resistance of the Boche intensified, a complete change of plan took place, involving an extension of the American front in the direction of the Vosges instead of toward the West, and the creation of the Second and Third American Armies to operate in that area. This plan evolved to the point of organizing the Second American Army and its participation in the final drive which took place in those last few days immediately preceding the Armistice; the cessation of hostilities then prevented its further development. But when the Advance P. C. of the First Army was opened at Souilly, some time in the third week in September, its personnel consisted in the main of those members of the Staff who were directly engaged in the active conduct of operations, and it was not until the offensive had begun to slow down that, little by little, additional personnel was shifted from Ligny to Souilly, until practically the entire Staff was functioning in Souilly, with only its less important divisions in the rear. General Drum told me to proceed to Souilly, and to open there an Advance P. C. of the Message Centre, taking with me such personnel and transportation as I considered necessary. I remained at Souilly for nine weeks, instead of for the shorter period which was indicated at the time of my departure; and during the first part of the Meuse-Argonne operation, and until further personnel was ordered forward from our rear echelon, the Advance Post of the Message Centre at Souilly handled over twice the volume of dispatches with one-third the personnel that had been available at Ligny-en-Barrois.

In compliance with General Drum's instructions, I surveyed the situation in regard to my Bureau of the Staff—the corresponding section of the staff in a French Army headquarters was called the Bureau de Courier—made the necessary dispositions and arrangements to ensure co-operation and co-ordination with the First Army plan, left my second in command in charge at Ligny-en-Barrois, and departed by motor for Souilly on September 21st, five days before the start of the Meuse-Argonne operation. The Message Centre was now "echeloned in depth", as it had a third section as far back as Neufchâteau, responsible for the receipt and distribution of the latest military maps, which were received and, in some cases I think, printed in that town. Bar-le-Duc,

through which the road to Souilly passed, was seething with activity and was full of American officers, although, it being daytime, there was no sign of the troops to which they were attached and which were en route to the forward areas. Souilly was a typical French village; the main road ran straight through the place, and from it a few streets branched off at right angles and terminated in the fields. The Headquarters of the Commanding General First Army was in the Mairie, a large stone building on the main road; the Operations Section of the General Staff was in wooden buildings grouped together in the immediate rear, while the other Sections of the Staff were all within two or three minutes' walk. The Message Centre was housed in a wooden shack with a corrugated iron roof, which was located immediately beside the Mairie and directly on the main road. Up to the time of the advent of the First Army Staff, Souilly, as I have said, had been the Headquarters of the Second French Army. The French Staff had evolved most complete arrangements for moving their Headquarters underground, in the event of heavy shelling or bombing, so that it could continue to function without being disturbed in case of necessity. Far down below the surface of the ground, and reinforced on top with concrete so that they were entirely protected from even a direct hit, were corridors with connecting offices, sleeping quarters and cooking facilities, complete with electric lighting and a battery of telephones, while the ventilation, for some reason which I was never able to discover, was excellent. We never, as a matter of fact, were forced to take advantage of these superior arrangements, but it was a comfort all the same to know that they were there in case of need.

At about this time the Message Centre was taken from under the sheltering wing of G-3, the Operations Section of the General Staff, and was placed under the direct command of General Drum, the Army Chief of Staff, thus giving me the proud distinction of commanding an independent and separate section of the Headquarters, although the smallest and the least important. At the same time, the functions of the Message Centre were somewhat amplified. The Army Code Room, responsible for the receipt and transmission, and for the decoding and coding, of all secret messages and despatches, was placed under the supervision and command of the Message Centre, which became responsible for the immediate distribution and transmission of such telegrams. If I remember correctly, there were in the Code Room two American and two French officers, together with a couple of field clerks, and while I was not responsible for the accuracy of their work, and was only concerned with the transmission of results, the code experts always showed me all messages in the clear, either before or after they had done their job. These messages were most interesting, coming as they did in cipher from Marshal Foch; from General Headquarters, A. E. F.; from General Bliss at the Supreme War Council; from our liaison officers with the various French and British Armies and Higher Headquarters; sometimes from Sir Douglas Haig; and occasionally, when General Pershing was definitely known to be at Souilly, from Washington. Through my opportunities of inspecting these messages I was able, not only to keep track of orders and instructions from "higher up" affecting the conduct

of operations by the First Army, but also to glean information from time to time in regard to the progress of events, both military and political, outside our own area. At about this time, too, several officer couriers were added to the Message Centre Staff. They were used for the transmission, in duplicate, of secret Field Orders or urgent communications to the commanding generals of the larger French and American field units. An officer courier would be sent by one road, while a second one would be dispatched at the same time by another route to the same destination, each carrying identical messages, so that, in case one failed to arrive for any reason, there was still number two to rely upon. Callers continued to drop in upon us in force at the Message Centre, as they had at Ligny-en-Barrois. Officers from the Corps and Division Staffs would come, in quest of information, and while they were trying to pump me, and asking questions to which I did not know the answers, I was usually able to extract from them some bit of news which proved useful.

Five days was not a very long time in which to do all that had to be done before the offensive started. My first impulse, metaphorically speaking, was to take off my coat and go at it. But by this time I had had several opportunities of observing how the French Staff officers handled themselves when they arrived at a new place, and I took a leaf out of their book. I had noticed that the very first thing with which they concerned themselves was the establishment of their mess, and in settling themselves in their sleeping quarters. Then, and then only, did they start on their official duties. At first I was disposed to be rather critical of this apparent absorption in creature comforts, if they can be called that in the field, but I speedily realized that this attention to the machinery of living came from a wisdom born of long experience. They had been at the War for a long time. They knew that the body did better work when it was rested and fed. They knew that at times there would be long intervals between rest and food. All the more reason, when a brief opportunity came, that they should secure a little of one or the other, that all possible arrangements which would facilitate this should be perfected in advance. Parenthetically, I admired intensely the systematic way in which the French Staff officers did their work. Our own Staff, through no fault of their own, were new at the job, and were so conscientious and so anxious to succeed that, when they had finished a hard day, and everything that they could do had been done, and it was too late to change or correct anything, they would light up and sit around and go over it all again, in the endeavour to catch some mistake. But when a French officer was through, he was through. He stopped at that point. He shut his mind off his work, if only for a few minutes. He did not wait around for some important message that was expected in an hour or so to come in. He took a nap, wherever he was quartered, subject to instant call. When the message arrived, he was rested and at his best. His duties in connection with that message, when it came, might take several hours, but they were performed with greater vigour and accuracy because of that short respite. It was no slothful giving way to love of comfort. It was plain common sense. So, emulating their example, my first act upon arriving at Souilly, after seeing

where my staff and my men were to be quartered and fed, was to find out where I was to exist myself, and to move in. At Souilly the Message Centre, now being an independent command so to speak, had its own mess, and I presided at the head of the table in the midst of my own official family. I missed very much the interesting conversation of the galaxy of colonels who had adorned the G-3 Mess at Ligny-en-Barrois, but I must confess that, in these new surroundings, the table talk was relieved from that feeling of restraint which the presence of superior rank imposes, and this freedom resulted at times in a considerable flow of real humour.

I was quartered in a wooden shack five minutes' walk from the Message Centre. The only two articles of furniture in my room were a bed and a stove, but they were the two essentials that really mattered. For several days after my arrival I was forced to do my own valeting, as the last of a constant succession of strikers[2] had been left behind at Ligny, and no other was available. I was missing the services of an orderly, simply because it took so much of my time to clean my own leathers and to attend to my equipment. I had no time to spare, and I was wondering what I could do about it, when, one afternoon, Major Willard Straight, who was on the First Army Staff, dropped in to see me. He died, shortly after, of influenza. I had been working hard, and I remember his remarking that I looked as if I ought to be in bed. I told him that I was as right as rain, but I groused about the inconvenience of having no striker, and expatiated upon the qualities of my old retainer in the Seventy-seventh Division, saying I felt sure, if only I had him at Souilly, that I should be able to take better advantage of such opportunities for rest as came along. The Major at once replied that, if that was my only trouble, he would have the man transferred from the Seventy-seventh Division to Headquarters First Army, and assigned to the Message Centre. That act of kindness should have been enough, but I realized that my hollow appearance was working wonders, and I thought that I had better get all that I could while the going was good, so I asked the Major if it would be possible to transfer at the same time from my old regiment a certain Lieutenant, who, I knew, possessed exactly the qualities which were needed in my Department at that particular juncture. The Major replied that it would be easy, and in the course of a few days the Lieutenant and my striker arrived together. I welcomed the latter almost with open arms, and from then on I received every possible personal attention; he had, in fact, no other duties than to look out for me, although nominally he was carried on the roster in his old grade of cook. He was invaluable. My shack burned down shortly afterwards. I was occupied during the early part of the proceedings, so that when I finally reached the scene, there was nothing left but a blazing ruin. I felt really discouraged, imagining that all my equipment and personal belongings had gone up in smoke, and that all that I had left was what I had on, and wondering how many days or weeks it would be before I could get to Paris to refit, and what I should do meanwhile. Suddenly my faithful striker appeared, perspiring at every pore, and presenting a

[2] Military servants.

most unmilitary appearance owing to the absence of his shirt. After saluting punctiliously, his broad Irish face broke into a grin, and he pointed to a heap in the middle distance, well out of range of sparks and covered with blankets. He had seen the fire start, and, having no duties, had left them at top speed and, running to the scene of action, had dragged all my property out to safety, at some personal risk and inconvenience. He invariably had in his possession about one hundred francs of my money, with strict injunctions always to buy cigarettes for me whenever an opportunity offered, as sometimes there were long intervals between the arrival of quartermaster consignments, and there was always danger of a personal shortage. Each enlisted man was allowed to buy two packages of cigarettes at a time, and no more. One day my striker presented me with eight packages at once. I asked him how he had managed it, and he replied that he had gone back to the rear end of the waiting line four times, but that on the occasion of his presenting himself at the window for the fifth consecutive time, the Quartermaster Sergeant had recognized him and had asked him if he was about to start a store. Small wonder that I was overjoyed to have back again as my personal retainer one in whom the qualities of resourcefulness and devotion were united to so great an extent. Moreover, it was an added pleasure to hear from him, upon his arrival at Souilly, that, after my departure from my regiment, my former Colonel had made him his own striker, and that my late commanding officer had given way to the most intemperate language when he had read the First Army order announcing the transfer, feeling sure as he did that the man was going back to me, and knowing that he could do nothing about it.

Delighted as my striker was to be back again with me, this was far from being the case with the Lieutenant who had arrived with him. This Lieutenant was a mere boy then. He had been perfectly happy in his work with troops, and was overwhelmed at being taken from them and put on staff duty. Within a couple of hours after his arrival he asked for an interview, and, after saying that he appreciated the promotion, he broke down, and with tears streaming down his face implored me to send him back to his men; he had been so fond of them all, he said, and thought that they had liked him. While all this was really touching, and did him great credit from one point of view, it was most unmilitary. A touch of severity seemed indicated, and it brought him around. When he had quieted down, I reminded him that, of the entire First Army Staff, probably the great majority, if it were simply a question of personal choice, would infinitely prefer service with troops to their present assignments; that it was not a question of choice, but of necessity; that men possessing certain qualifications, of which he was one, were needed on the Staff in order that the troops should be able to function properly, and that men went without question, sinking personal preferences, wherever their superiors thought that they could serve for the greatest benefit to all concerned. I told him that, in regard to himself, he would have to trust to my judgment, and that I would not send him back to his old unit, even if it were possible to do so; that time was pressing, and that I wished to outline at once his new duties. I immediately

gave him so much work to do, that he had no more time in which to be "homesick", and in the course of a few days he was cheerful and happy again, and turned out to be one of the best of my subordinates, as I knew he would. Later on, after the Armistice, I recommended him for promotion to captain, and a letter from him, received after my return to the United States, told me that he had obtained his step.

Preparations for the start of the offensive had been rapidly pushed, and the Message Centre, keeping pace with the other Sections of the Staff, had been going full speed ahead. The officer, a Lieutenant Colonel, commanding the Bureau de Courier at the Headquarters of the Fourth French Army on our left, came over to Souilly to see me, as it was necessary to cover, both in the French and American Armies, through General Orders, certain details in regard to the courier service, and it was essential that the wording in both Orders should be identical. It was to ensure this that he had called, accompanied by an interpreter. They entered my room together, and the French Colonel addressed me in rather broken English, apologizing for his lack of fluency in that tongue; quite soon, however, he began speaking in French. I replied, to the best of my ability—it was in a curious mixture of early governess and late "A. E. F." French—and after we had conversed for several minutes, the Colonel made a typically French gesture of superb politeness, and told the interpreter that he need not remain. Nothing could have been better calculated to set me at my ease, and to increase my fluency, if not my accuracy. The truth was, that the French Colonel saw that he himself had enough English to make a go of things, in case my French broke down; that was why he had tried it out on me at the start. We remained in conference for some time, and finally parted with mutual expressions of satisfaction and of esteem, but I was immensely relieved, not only a day or so afterwards, but upon similar occasions later on, when I compared the French and American Army Orders as actually issued, and found that they said the same thing.

The offensive opened on the morning of September 26th, about a year and a half after the United States had entered the War. The attack started at 5:30 A. M., after an artillery preparation lasting three hours. The First Army order of battle, from the Moselle on the right to the Argonne Forest on the left, was as follows:—Fourth American Army Corps, Second French Colonial Corps, Seventeenth French Corps, Third American Army Corps, Fifth American Army Corps, and First American Army Corps. My former unit, the Seventy-seventh Division, was on the left flank of the Army, facing the Argonne Forest. No advance was intended on the line from the Moselle to the Meuse. The attack was to be on the front from the Meuse to the Argonne, where our Third, Fifth and First Corps were operating, with nine divisions in line. It is difficult to refrain from describing the progress made, the various phases and incidents of absorbing interest, for, as one thinks about it, even after all these years, the floods of memory are released and it all comes surging back again; one recaptures the details, the excitement, the breathless interest of those hectic days. But all those events of the immediately succeeding weeks must be passed

over, up to the 16th of October, when Major General Liggett, then promoted to Lieutenant General, took command of the First Army, Lieutenant General Bullard at the same time being promoted to command the newly formed Second American Army with a front from the Moselle to Fresnes-en-Wöevre, while General Pershing himself assumed direction of the First American Group of Armies. It will be possible, perhaps, in a later article, to give a brief account of the American effort in that last phase, and in the days immediately preceding the Armistice.

Late one night I was sent for by General Drum to report to him in the Commanding General's room on the second floor of the Mairie, as he wished to give me certain instructions personally. This room extended the entire depth of the building, and along the unbroken surface of one of the walls was an immense military map of the First Army front, which showed in detail the character of the terrain in which our troops were operating. Hills, forests, swamps, streams, and altitudes were clearly indicated, so that, for the expert reader of military maps, it was possible to stand facing that wall and actually to *see*, in the mind's eye, the natural features of the country itself and the character of the positions in which our troops were located. These positions had been brought up to the minute from the evening reports of the Army Corps, and were indicated on the map by markings in charcoal and by pins. The utmost quiet and stillness prevailed. The windows were heavily draped with black curtains, to shut in any vestige of light. A confidential field-clerk was working at a noiseless typewriter in a far corner of the room. General Drum sat at his desk, upon which were several telephones, while General Liggett, his hands in his pockets and a cigar in his mouth, was walking slowly up and down in front of the great map, stopping from time to time and standing motionless while he contemplated some given point on that long line and studied the situation there. I knew that he could visualize the terrain, and the actual situations in which the troops found themselves, almost as vividly and as accurately as if he had been on the spot in person. There was an atmosphere of intense concentration in that room, of nervous tension, but also there was a feeling of complete detachment, as if one were lifted up, above and beyond the play of great forces which it was possible to see there in that proper perspective and with that quiet judgment and one-pointedness of mind which were essential if those forces were to be properly aligned and set in motion. It seemed impossible to believe that, in the stillness of that room, with its atmosphere of unhurried awareness, the movements and the action of an army of over one million men were being directed.

I saluted as I entered, and stood motionless by the door until, in a minute or two, General Drum beckoned to me to come over to him; General Liggett had not even turned his head at my entrance, so complete were his absorption and concentration. I stood by General Drum's desk, and he began in a low voice to give me the instructions which he had in mind. He had not proceeded far when General Liggett turned and said, "Hugh, come over here". I remained standing where I was, and watched the two generals as they walked

up and down together in front of the great wall map, conversing in low tones, and sometimes standing side by side in absolute silence as they studied the situation at some particular point. Finally, General Liggett pointed to a spot on the map where there was a depression on our front and where our forward line was not even and continuous. I saw General Drum nod his head, and heard him ask one or two questions; then he came, walking quickly, back again to his desk. He took up the telephone and asked for the Headquarters of one of our Army Corps, and the connection was practically instantaneous. I started to withdraw out of hearing, but he motioned with his free hand for me to stand where I was. He then gave the command, briefly, tersely, that a certain Brigade on the front of that Army Corps was to move forward at once a matter of half a mile, in order to rectify the line, so that the front should be aligned and continuous when the moment came, two or three hours later, for again moving forward. He indicated the exact position on the map which that Brigade was to occupy when its forward movement had been completed, listened for a moment or two to confirm that his order had been thoroughly understood, laid down the receiver of the telephone, resumed in concise words his instructions to me at exactly the point at which he had broken off ten minutes before, waited for a moment to be sure that I had understood, and then nodded his dismissal. From that quiet, still room there had gone the command, first to Army Corps, from there to Division, then to the Brigade Headquarters in question, that between seven and eight thousand men should move from the positions where they had dug themselves in for the night, should forge forward in spite of enemy resistance, receiving such artillery support as was necessary, until their presence on a rectified line ensured flank protection for the units on their right and left, and the general strengthening of the whole front when the time came for the unified movement forward. No doubt in that Brigade there was much grousing, many bitter complaints, much criticism of the Staff, when the order was received. Everything was quiet on their immediate front. They had made good progress that day. Why could they not be let alone? Why were they called upon again for further effort, and in advance of the time when they already knew that further effort would be required? The answer was, because they *could* only see the situation on their own immediate front. It seemed quiet and satisfactory. But they, concentrated at one point, could not see, from the larger perspective, the fault that lay in the very nature of their position; could not realize that, to remain where they were, would threaten the security and the progress of other elements, and would jeopardize the evenly developed movement forward of our united forces. It remained for the High Command, with its powers of perspective, with its knowledge of the inter-relation of all the elements composing the whole, to see this, and to call upon them for that immediate and additional effort at a given point which would ensure the later co-ordination and even progress of our advance.

This incident made a profound impression upon me, at first only from the military standpoint. I had had an opportunity—as I had had before more

than once on a smaller scale at Headquarters First Army Corps north of the Marne, when General Liggett had been in command there—to see the working of the machinery from the inside, as it were. It was of absorbing interest, for one who had been only a civilian a few months before, to witness the handling of army corps and divisions, to watch brigades moved about on the map as if they had been platoons. The smooth and efficient working, the watchfulness and ability, the close mutual understanding of the High Command, aroused my admiration. I realized, as I thought it over, that these two men, and others commanding the Army Corps and the Divisions, would go down in our history as great generals; that I was watching the making of military history. Impossible, too, not to catch, in the midst of the tension, the atmosphere of confidence and of sureness, of determination and of iron will. As has been so often said, an army takes its tone from those at its head; if the morale and ability at headquarters are high, all of the component units in turn catch fire, are imbued with the same spirit. I could sense this leaven working in our First Army. I had been able to see half-trained troops change in character, and begin to produce results equal to those of our veteran divisions. The whole First Army, staff and line, was evolving rapidly, gaining daily in efficiency, and the impelling power was coming from those two men whom I had seen in that quiet room.

As I thought further about this incident, however, it began to assume a far deeper significance, a more profound meaning. In an earlier article I have said that the military life, the military order, seemed, of all human institutions, to be the nearest in its forms and essence to the spiritual hierarchy, to the life and order of the spiritual world. It is easy to see that this is true in certain fundamentals. If a man would grow in inner ways, if he would render that service to his Master which alone makes growth possible, and which real growth in its turn passionately demands, it is essential that he should possess the qualities and the attributes of the soldier,—fortitude, endurance, dashing courage, the fighting spirit. Like the soldier, he must sink all thought of self in loyalty to a Cause; he must not only forego ease and comfort, he must gladly welcome hardship. He must obey, he must grow in obedience, until, no longer obeying blindly—as he was forced to do at first because he knew no other way—his obedience becomes intelligent, rendered so by his own increasing vision, by his own deepening understanding. In our effort to accentuate this likeness between the inner life of the individual who is striving for self-mastery, for spiritual growth, and the life of the soldier, we constantly use military analogies, we express our comparisons in military parallels. When we speak of watchfulness, we do so in terms of the sentry at his post. When we would emphasize fortitude, endurance, we speak of holding the front line trenches. Contempt of danger, the necessity of maintaining ceaseless contact with the enemy, we compare to being always on the firing line. When we would impress the need for obedience, we direct attention to the fundamental fact, and rightly in such circumstances, that unquestioning obedience is the first duty of the soldier, as it is in the inner life. These military parallels and analogies are apt

and expressive; they are effective in making vivid the problem and in solving it; they are inspiring in their implications. Parenthetically, I often think that they would be more effective, more true to the problems actually facing a soldier, if they were less negative, couched less often in terms which imply stationary warfare, the warfare of the trenches, even garrison life, and if they were expressed more frequently in terms of the warfare of movement, in the language of the attack. That is the kind of inner warfare, I believe, in which the Lodge wishes us to engage. I cannot for a moment think that the Masters want us, in that warfare, ever to reach the point at which we must dig in, either because we can go no further forward, or to prevent ourselves from being swept back. It is the attack that they want, always the attack. So, instead of the sentry at his post, with its implication of negative watchfulness, I like to think of the outpost, flung forward when a battalion attack is consolidating for a further effort, actively alert to sense every movement of the enemy, to find that weak spot at which further attack will be most effective. Fortitude, endurance, it seems to me, mean to the soldier, not holding a front line trench, but lying out in the open under shell fire, waiting until it lifts so that he can go forward again. The thick of the fight conveys to him no implication of a stationary firing line; he sees himself, with bayonet fixed, going forward with his comrades, following the barrage, until they come to grips hand to hand. In the attack, he does not have to be urged to obedience; he is trying actively, then, to co-operate, with all that is in him. It is the spirit of the attack that clears the air, that makes all things new and vital. It is in this spirit that we should go forward ourselves, in our inner warfare. It is in similes and comparisons, in military analogies of this aggressive nature, that we should draw the parallel between the inner life, the warfare of the spirit, and the life of the soldier, in order that their likeness may be accurate and clear.

All these things have to do with the inner life of the aspirant for chêlaship who, we will say, is in process of attainment. When, however, he has in some measure attained; when he is aware that, at last, certain definite qualities have developed within him to such a point that he can consciously control them, make considered practical use of them, in the development of his own inner attack,—what then? The old similes and comparisons take on for him, in addition to their former truth, a new and deeper significance. He sees the military life, and the life and order of the spiritual world, more truly at one than ever before. He sees himself at length in command of forces within himself, which before were untrained and unruly, but which now he can use, can swing, at will. He sees himself in the position of a general, of the commander of an army; he knows that he can consciously use one inner quality to reinforce another, to relieve pressure upon another, as an army commander causes his divisions and brigades to be moved about in an offensive. He begins to understand something of the strategy and of the tactics of the inner life. A whole new field of action, a new viewpoint, opens up, based always upon the fundamental qualities inherent in the soldier, dependent always for continuity and development upon the retention and further growth of those soldierly

characteristics. If, up to this point, he has developed in the spirit of the attack, it is in that same spirit that he will approach his new opportunity. He will appraise his own inner position, his weaknesses and his strong points, with the same quiet detachment, with the same perspective, as the army commander who, at headquarters, surveys the positions of his divisions and brigades, and those of the enemy. He will redouble his effort to strengthen some inner weakness, to move it up into line with his other qualities, so that he may not be weakened at points at which he has already made progress. He will look down upon the field of battle from above, as it were, consciously in control of his forces, now able to obey with intelligence the promptings of the High Command, because once he obeyed blindly in utter self-giving. He will never waver in attack, even when he seems for the time to have met a check, for there is no such thing as defeat or repulse in that warfare when the great Companions are leading and directing, and when our will is at one with theirs, and our only thought is to serve their purposes.

CENTURION.

(To be continued)

Blessed is he that truly loves and seeketh not love in return. . . . Blessed is he that serves and desires not to be served. Blessed is he that doeth good unto others and seeketh not that others do good to him.—LITTLE FLOWERS OF ST. FRANCIS.

Gentleness and cheerfulness . . . they are the perfect duties. . . . If your morals make you dreary, depend upon it they are wrong. I do not say "give them up," for they may be all you have, but conceal them like a vice, lest they spoil the lives of better and simpler people.—R. L. STEVENSON.

VINCENT VAN GOGH

IN thinking back over the many years of the QUARTERLY's life, I can remember no article devoted entirely to the work of an artist, though we are assured over and over again that the Lodge works throughout all the fields of human endeavour, and with special directness in those arts and sciences where inspiration is made possible by aspiration and concentration. The reason is not far to seek; the work of a painter can scarcely be translated into words; it must be seen to be appreciated and understood, and to try to explain it without examples at hand, is a futile waste of effort.

Believing this, I am making no attempt at a critical analysis of the art of Vincent van Gogh; for the purpose in mind it will be best to accept the high evaluation placed upon it by the connoisseurs and museums of the world, as well as the popular acclaim which was accorded the recent exhibition of his collected work as it toured the larger cities of America, from New York to San Francisco. It is a tardy recognition, for he died, penniless and artistically unknown, more than forty-seven years ago. There is, however, at our disposal much material concerning the man himself, for perhaps no artist, unless it be William Blake, has left such a full account of both his outer and his inner life, in his own letters, and in conversations recorded in the volumes written by his friends and critics. It is because these documents seem to reveal a guidance which bears a theosophical interpretation, and because aims and ideals are nearer the world of ultimate causes than any concrete manifestations, that this study is offered to the QUARTERLY.

I think it should first of all be noted that the years of his activity lay within the very significant last quarter of the nineteenth century, and that he was a part of the art movement which at that time succeeded in breaking through the hide-bound rules and prejudices of the academic schools. The great cycles initiated by the men of the Renaissance and the Dutch masters had been fairly rounded out, and for a long time past the underlying principles sought and practised by a Michael Angelo or a Rembrandt, with toil and concentrated devotion, had been turned into superficial formulas whose results were sterile and ever-weakening repetitions. The first stirring can be traced to the English Constable, but it was left to the strongly original group of French Impressionists to revolutionize and revivify the world of art by their discovery of new laws which set all Europe and even America by the ears. With Manet and Monet among the leaders, stultifying preconceptions were swept away in favour of a fresh vision, and surprising theories of light and colour and the laws of optics were frankly stated in canvas after canvas which are to-day the classics of an era. Naturally some of the lesser men followed mere will-o'-the-wisps or partial truths, and inevitably there were also the charlatans and the seekers after notoriety.

Vincent van Gogh was born in 1853 at Zundert in Brabant, where his father was the revered pastor of the village church, and his home, gently ruled and filled with a sturdy brood of which he was the eldest, was happy and normal. The boy was from the first intensely devout, and long religious discussions filled the hours while he with his brother Theo, as constant companion, ranged the fields and heaths of the country-side in untrammelled freedom. To Theo, Vincent was already the seer and prophet he was always to remain, and when one day while resting by the mill-brook they solemnly promised each other to work and strive for good and the service of the world, it was a true pledge, never lightly disregarded by either of them through all the changes and vicissitudes of the years to come.

The fair prospect of a prosperous and congenial life together, stretched invitingly ahead, for in the less immediate family circle were the Brothers van Gogh, the most famous art dealers in Europe, who were ready to welcome their brilliant and studious nephews into the firm. Vincent was scarcely sixteen years old when he proudly entered their employ at the Hague Branch; a natural lover of art, he was familiar with all the masterpieces which his uncles had collected for their private enjoyment as well as for commercial purposes, and he quickly became a trusted and valued salesman. It was by a natural step upward on the ladder of foreseen success that he arrived, before he was twenty years old, at the London house as a representative of the firm.

His letters from England during the first year were rapturously happy. In spite of his professional standing, he was blessed with scarcely an ounce of critical acumen, and everything that he could label as morally "good" came as grist to his mill—great pictures and sentimental trash, great music or hymn-singing at the Moody and Sankey revivals, great ladies who frequented the shop, or his landlady's coquettish daughter, were all equally a part of the glamour of his days. It would have seemed from his letters as though he might have gone on along the pleasant paths of least resistance for ever, when suddenly, out of the blue, came the thunder-clap of his first sorrow, and the whole course of his life was changed, definitely and for ever. The love affair with the little coquette, which had really touched the depth of his ardent heart, was brought by her to a wantonly cruel ending, and his immediate reaction reveals the very mainsprings of his true character and foreshadows the response he would make to all the future crises of his career. Not for a moment did he dream of casting the blame on any save his own quite blameless head; he was simply bowed with a sense of his unworthiness, and he plunged into the throes of searching self-examination to discover the faults which had made him unacceptable; with Christ as the perfect pattern and example, he would strive to renounce all selfish desires, and he would root out all the traces of evil which he could discover. Some of this could be managed unobtrusively, he thought, through personal sacrifice and prayer, but his business life would be more difficult, for that involved other people; however, that too must be purified, and he resolved to bring better judgment to bear and to be scrupulously honest with the picture-buying public. He forthwith began to explain convincingly

to the fine ladies who were ready to empty their purses at his uncle's shop, how worthless and trashy were the paintings of their choice. Such financially ruinous tactics could obviously not be brooked even in a Vincent van Gogh, so when he proved impervious to practical remonstrances, the door of the London house was firmly closed behind him. There was an unsuccessful attempt to reinstate him in the Paris branch, but by that time he knew that he could never again treat art as a commodity, and he turned away from all the glittering prospects of that world without hesitation or a backward glance of regret. His one over-mastering desire was to throw himself into some work, any work, where he could serve God in one-pointed devotion, free from all compulsion to compromise with his conscience. He made the first trial of this new life as a sort of curate-teacher in an English school, working merely for his board and lodging; but, finding that he was hardly worth even that pittance to the head-master, he returned to Holland with a fixed determination to study theology and follow in his father's footsteps. No one believed him capable of the arduous scholastic training, and their doubts were quickly justified. An attempt to qualify in a less demanding institution for the training of simple Evangelists, also ended in defeat, but under the auspices of these Brethren he gained permission to go as a missionary to the miners of a stark bleak region called the Borinage, where all the ills of hunger and cold and direst poverty were rife. Perhaps for the only time in his life he was here able to pour out the whole content of his compassionate heart, and to feel the return of genuine gratitude and love. In every possible way he shared his people's lot, giving away, bit by bit, all the extra comforts accorded his position —his better bedding, his more ample food and warmer clothing, till the poorest among them was no worse off than he; he even darkened his face so that he should not seem apart or aloof from his smoke-begrimed parishioners. He wrote to Theo: "If I could stay here for three years, learning and teaching, I should have something to say worth the hearing, of that I am convinced." He did remain there for three years, but not as a preacher, for the Brethren, hearing of his unprecedented methods, sent officers to investigate, and he was dismissed with a grave reprimand for his unorthodox sermons and his unconventional behaviour.

He began to draw. In a letter to his brother who was now high in the good graces of "Goupil and van Gogh", we read: "Often I am drawing late into the night to strengthen the thoughts raised by the aspect of things here—the dark miners, the weary women, and the little huts with the friendly lights shining through the windows. The dark thorn-hedges against the snow look like black characters on white paper, like the pages of the Gospel. . . . If some one has, even for a short time, taken a free course at the great University of Misery, and has paid attention to the things he sees with his eyes and hears with his ears, he will end in Believing." He begs for prints by Millet and Rembrandt for "a great picture speaks more and speaks more clearly than even Nature herself. One must learn to read, to live, to see; there is something of Rembrandt in the Gospels and something of the Gospels in Rembrandt, if only

one sees in the right way; and there is something too of Shakespeare in Rembrandt. My God, how beautiful and mysterious Shakespeare is! his language and style are like an artist's brush quivering with fervour." He copied over and over again the prints of "The Sower" and "The Reaper", but not slavishly; he used them rather as models, much as he did the living figure, and the results were van Gogh's rather than Millet's.

Toward the end of his third year in the Borinage, he writes: "Theo, I must have instruction; I can go no further alone; some advanced artist would be as one of God's angels to me—I say it in all seriousness and without exaggeration." And from this time forward there was no doubt of his objective, art possessed him, and with all the force of his nature he pressed toward the mark; he would at all costs learn to draw, to subdue his clumsy and unmanageable hand till it would do his bidding; he would master perspective and anatomy, and above all he would cherish the salt and savour within his soul, so that when the hour should strike—as strike it surely would—he would have "wisdom and power, power which is the best wisdom", to answer the call. From 1881 to 1885 there was an unremitting grind, whether at the Academy of Brussels, on the open moors, in his little *ménage* at the Hague, or (for very short spells) as the pupil of some well-known painter of the day. Anton Mauve gives an amusing and, we feel sure, typical glimpse of him: "He seemed as modest as a worm, listened devoutly to all I said, was grateful and industrious—and then suddenly, 'No—No, Mauve, that's not the way at all', and my studio knew him no more". Millet, Rembrandt and Delacroix were the teachers before whom he never failed to bow, and from them he learned all that could be taught to one who was so essentially a law unto himself, with the necessity laid upon him to work out his own salvation in fear and trembling before the Lord.

The winter of 1885 he spent with his parents, impelled by a desire to paint the farmers and weavers of Neunen, his father's new parish. He was in a fury of work; he longed to paint fifty of these human faces, and then fifty more, that he might "create the one head that contained them all". His brush was like a plough in his hand, with which he dug out the hollow planes and deep furroughs of their rugged features. In the spring he painted a large picture which he called "Die Ardappeleters"; it was shaggy and rough, that he well knew; but it had a certain life of its own, it was at any rate the best he could do, and he sent it to Theo, who was a very important person indeed at the Goupil galleries. Theo wrote to him immediately, praising his brother's advance in drawing and composition, but scoffing at the dullness of the colour and telling him in glowing terms of the new Parisian artists and their brilliant palette. In response, Vincent held up the example of his heroes, Rembrandt and Delacroix; but his self-confidence was shaken, and by February of the next year he had yielded to his brother's importunities and the two were living together high up on Montmartre.

In the entresol of the Goupil gallery, where Theo was permitted to exhibit the work of "the wild men", Vincent met all the most revolutionary heralds of light and air and vibrating pigments. To his eyes the pictures were incredible,

contradicting all his most cherished beliefs; but his utter modesty saved him both from the Scylla of complete confusion, and the Charybdis of hasty refutation. Although bewildered and amazed, he sat at the feet of the exponents of all the strange and conflicting theories, observing everything, and listening with all the attention he could summon to the wordy battles which raged whenever two or three of them met together. The one prop common to them all was the newly discovered excellence of the Japanese prints which could be picked up at the book-stalls for a few sous, and over which he pored for hours on end.

His own work was pronounced hopelessly heavy, dark and over-emphasized; so for weeks and months on end he tortured himself with efforts to force his talents into the new moulds, to stamp out his powerful rhythms which precluded delicacy of handling, and to substitute primary colours for his browns and greys. To his chagrin he seemed totally incapable of mastering the new harmonies; he and Theo both realized that he was losing all his individuality for no apparent gain whatsoever, and on one particularly dark day he knew that he was through with Paris and all its sophistications, and with the same finality with which he had left Goupil, had left the Borinage, had left Holland, he knew that he must leave this city of changes and touch again the constant life of the earth. Almost at random he chose Arles as his destination, impelled by a longing for the sunshine and simplicity of the south. He arrived in February, 1887, and stepped into a new world. It was as though scales had dropped from his eyes, and chains from his spirit, and he had entered full-fledged into the freedom of his own creative genius; his long apprenticeship was over, and he could now rally the forces of every experience among the miners and peasants and the artists of Paris, into a synthesis which was wholly and uniquely himself.

Everything about him cried aloud to be painted; the pulsing life of the city squares, the bright uniforms of the Zouaves, the rich beauty of the Arlesian women; and there was need and use for every line of the gay new palette which he had so painstakingly acquired. Outside the town the almond trees were laden with masses of pink bloom, and he dared not pause for a moment lest they should vanish away; he finished ten pictures in as many days, rushing early each morning to the city gates, paintbox in hand and a fresh canvas under his arm, the inhabitants gazing curiously as the red-headed creature raced past. At night he returned exhausted; ravenous too, and therefore rationing himself with extreme care, for he wanted to conserve every ounce of strength, and later in the evening he took stock of the day's work. While he was actually painting, it did not seem to him that he thought at all, it was as though Nature were standing over and above him, and he was simply the tool of an irresistible impulse which controlled the rhythm of his incisive brush-strokes and guided the co-ordination of his masses,—just as the words of a poet are lifted beyond his own comprehension on the wings of inspiration. He was puzzled about the connection between this dynamic power, and his own hand which did the work, but he was pleased that it had taken shape, for he

knew it to be the inherent, organic life of his creation. Sometimes he could correct a bit here or there, but not unless he was able to feel the same unifying rhythm under whose spell it had been formed and bound into this thing of vital tensions. As a thinker he was a disciple of Rembrandt and Delacroix, and as a draughtsman he had schooled himself so that visual exactitude was as one of the Ten Commandments; but now a new element, *organic function*, dominated him and became all-important, so that he could say, "I will paint a portrait of my chair—no, rather I will paint its dependability"; he ceased to paint trees, but, instead, growth, tree-like existence; instead of blossoms, bloom itself. Colour, too, took on a new attribute and became a spiritual quality. When he had painted a portrait of one of his friends as true to factual appearance as he possibly could, he said, "Now comes the reality! the blond hair shall be enhanced to a marvellous pale yellow, the dull wall behind shall be changed to a deep blue extending into infinity, and the head shall seem as mysterious and as luminous as a star suspended in space".

Week after week through the burning heat of summer, he painted as though in a trance, and the pile of his canvases mounted so rapidly that he had to rent a house to contain them. It was a lovely house, all pure white inside except for the rich red of the tiled floors, and outside it was yellow like the sun itself, and it awakened memories of a dream he and Theo had cherished, as they wandered over the fields of Brabant, of a brotherhood of saintly men, ten of them perhaps, who should live together and work for good. In Paris they had talked it over again; only now it was to be a brotherhood of artists—"for were not artists the only true seekers after God, in a Godless world?" Here it might really come to pass, here in his beautiful house; and as a beginning he invited Gauguin, who was said to be ill and quite penniless, to come and share its hospitality. It was a disastrous experiment, hastening if not actually causing his first seizure of insanity. Overwrought by the heat of the sun and by the might of his creative effort, the cynical gibes of this giant among painters, whose words and voice pierced like a dagger, could not be sanely borne, and madness, temporary but complete, descended upon him, and his guest departed with a cold-blooded indifference which we are under no compulsion to condone, even though Vincent, the all-forgiving, gives the excuses for such a course. The thought of the days which followed, when he lay alone and self-wounded, the door barricaded against a horde of little ruffians who shouted rhyming insults through the windows, can scarcely be endured by the mind. The protection of the asylum to which he was removed upon the request of the citizens of Arles, was welcomed as a very haven of rest; there, for the next two years, and until just a few months before his death, he remained, grateful to "the kindly warden with the face of a beast of prey" who insured a safety that allowed him to paint, whenever his health permitted. Between seizures he was perfectly sane, guarding with jealous care his self-control, which meant control of his brush and the freedom of the smiling garden, —the subject of one of his last and greatest pictures. There was a gentle acceptance of his condition, and a calm content that even Theo, who knew him as no one

else ever did, could scarcely understand; Theo too was an artist at heart, and through the inextricable blending of their natures had lived a life of keen creative realization of his brother's genius, and had been lifted by it above all the drudgery of his days at Goupil's. He believed beyond all doubting that down there in the south had lived the master of modern times, who had brought the "furioso" of Michael Angelo into the world of to-day, and had carried forward the tenets of impressionism to a new sublimation. But he knew also that great as were Vincent's paintings, the man himself was still greater, and it had been his share of the work to guard the conditions of life so that the innocence and purity of its aims could be preserved. The demands and the needs had been difficult, of necessity, for it was no easy matter to keep such purity unsullied, as it had to be in order that Vincent could see God in Nature and in man, and could be given the power to express it in the only way possible for him, through the language of his art.

For none of us perhaps is the man or his life or his painting easy of comprehension; but there are certain verses which come involuntarily into one's thoughts, not quite to be grasped by the mind, but conveying a sense that, hidden in the mystery of their wisdom, are the questions and the solution of the tragedy and the triumph that was Vincent van Gogh.

By whom impelled flies the forward-impelled Mind? By whom compelled does the first Life go forth? Who in sooth, is the Bright One who compels sight and hearing?

That which they call the Hearing of hearing, the Mind of mind, that is the Life of life, the Sight of sight. Setting this free, the Wise going forth from this world become immortal.

E.A.

No man is free who is not master of himself.—EPICTETUS.

To the clear eye, the smallest fact is a window through which the Infinite may be seen.—HUXLEY.

APPEAL OF THEOSOPHY

THERE is a tendency in the world to-day to *disguise*, that is, to take from the past, various ideas and systems—some having reasonable merit, but others having proved definitely pernicious in former times—to give these ideas and systems new names, and to label them as original with those who now advance them. The claim for their adoption, or for forcing them upon humanity, is that they are modern, and meet circumstances such as never existed before in the world. Under this head, we can do no better, perhaps, than to quote from Sir Thomas Browne: "Live by old Ethicks and the classical Rules of Honesty. Put no new names or notions upon Authentick Virtues and Vices. Think not that Morality is Ambulatory; that Vices in one age are not Vices in another; or that Virtues, which are under the everlasting Seal of right Reason, may be Stamped by Opinion." In the light of that warning, contrast the method by which so many old ideas and systems are being foisted upon mankind under false labels, with the way in which Theosophy was brought to the Western world, and the claims made for it.

Madame Blavatsky, the accredited Messenger of the last century from the Great Lodge of Masters, brought Theosophy to the Western world. No claim was made for it as being new or modern. Madame Blavatsky did not call for its adoption because it originated with her. Instead, she *revived* ancient truths; truths drawn from the sages of old, the Ancient of Days, the same yesterday, to-day, to-morrow: changeless, immutable, regardless of the surface flux and flow down the centuries. If there were any merit in presenting something as new or modern, it would seem that the Great Lodge of Masters would have had its Messenger do it. Furthermore, if one takes a walk with a companion, one should know who he is, his credentials, and whither he is bound; it is dangerous to venture forth with an impostor. So, from the standpoint of ordinary common sense, Theosophy should have an appeal to-day, though its real appeal, that which adds height and depth to man's view of life, far transcends its appeal to common sense.

Theosophical philosophy points to the fundamental Unity back of apparent diversity, and shows that manifestation is not continuous, but periodical, cyclic. There is the cycle of great outbreathing, and that of great inbreathing. These periods of manifestation, known as Manvantaras in Hinduism, stretch endlessly into the past and endlessly forward into the future, with periods of rest, Pralayas, in between. Life is eternal, beginningless and endless. Spirit never was not, and never will cease to be. At the beginning of each Manvantara, the Supreme, the One, bestirs itself, so to speak, and sends forth light or life. This life descends plane by plane, each plane being a reflection of the plane next above, till it reaches down to the mineral kingdom; and even below that, we are told, though few are aware, as yet, of kingdoms below the mineral.

Then it turns, ascends back to the Source, carrying with it the fruits of the experience gained during manifestation. Back of this conception of height and depth, which Theosophy makes so vivid, there always is Unity, the unity of a common spiritual source; for man, the unity of all souls with the Over-soul. So it has been said that life proceeds from Unity, through diversity, and back to Unity.

Very briefly, that is the picture of life which Madame Blavatsky *revived* for the Western world. A picture showing force, inspiration, coming down to man, which is his to use and to give back again; a lesser cycle, as it were, described within the Great Cycle: from inspiration, to experience, and back to inspiration. Considering the magnificence of it, man might ask himself, "Where do I fit into it, poor little creature that I am,—into that tremendous sweep of height and depth?"

These tenets drawn from the sages of old, were not matters of speculation with them. They were principles of life which they lived and experienced, and, by so doing, attained immortality. They are laws of the growth of the soul, which, if used and followed, will lead to attainment, just as they have, and always will. Surely, if that is the case, Theosophy was not brought to the Western world merely for man's intellectual entertainment, or for his emotional indulgence; but, undoubtedly, in the hope and belief that these laws of the soul would be read and studied, tested and lived, here in the West by man as he is. How? Where to begin? Theosophy calls attention to the value of correspondences, asks man to look about him and seek correspondences, which he, in turn, can apply to himself. Acting on this advice, let us quote from *Isis Unveiled*, and follow a clue growing out of the words quoted: "Nature is triune; there is a visible, objective nature; an invisible, in-dwelling and energizing nature, the exact model of the other, and its vital principle, and above these two, Spirit, source of all forces, alone, eternal, and indestructible. The lower two constantly change; the higher third does not." The passage calls to our attention that man, also, is triune; with body, soul, and, brooding over and illuminating these, immortal Spirit. "When the real man [or soul,] succeeds in merging himself with the latter, he becomes an immortal entity."

With this statement in mind, if we consider the vegetable kingdom, we find, there, examples of the natural law of growth, from within outward; each species pressing toward the fulfilment of its kind, and thus fulfilling its destiny in the great evolutionary sweep of life. Take the rose for instance, as it unfolds, gradually, to full bloom. There is, first, the stem; then, the leaf; the bud; and, at last, the radiant beauty of the flower itself. When we come to man, however, we have to reckon with mind and free will, with his self-conscious power of choice. Though it is by exercising this power in making wrong choices that man has degraded himself, nevertheless, it is through the proper exercise of this power that he can fit himself into his rightful place in the evolution of the soul; that he can properly apply this body of laws of soul-growth, knowledge of which Madame Blavatsky revived for the West; that he can, in short, grow as the flower grows,—exfoliate.

There are various ways in which the correspondence suggested by the quotation from *Isis Unveiled* may be used to the profit of the soul. However, in the light of his power of choice, an apt correlative is found in the realm of conduct. In this connection, the late Lord Moulton drew some pertinent and helpful distinctions. He was not, primarily, a philosopher, a scientist, or a moralist. Rather, he was a man of action, and Great Britain's Minister of Munitions during part of the World War. In an address, delivered before the Authors' Club of London, Lord Moulton spoke of three domains of conduct. First, the domain of positive, man-made law, which must be obeyed. Next, the domain of free choice, where we claim and enjoy (or think we enjoy) complete freedom,—as in choosing from a menu what to order in a restaurant. Between these two, Lord Moulton placed what he termed the domain of "obedience to the unenforceable", in which there rules neither positive law nor absolute freedom. As Lord Moulton emphasized, this third domain is the large and important one which lies between "can do" and "may do", where there ought to be obedience to the sway of duty, fairness, courtesy, courage, honour, good taste, and all those qualities which, combined, comprise nobility, and which are expressions of the "draw" of the Divine Will acting upon and within us.

Here, then, is a clue to a method of using theosophical tenets as practical aids in making daily, hourly, minute-by-minute choices, which will tend to throw the weight of imagination and will on to the side of Divine Will; as aids in helping man, in his present sphere of circumstances, self-consciously to become an integral part in the great purpose and plan of evolution. Regardless of his social status, there always is a best choice to be made in every event which presents itself. If he cannot discover that, at least he can base his decisions on moral right and wrong. Moral right is a step toward spiritual right. Too often, however, during his busy hours, those hours spent in earning his daily bread, man thinks he must be over-shrewd, and, in a sense, must circumnavigate principles, if he is to maintain his business success.

Recently, the writer had the pleasure and privilege of meeting the president of a company which deals in a certain important commodity. He was so impressed with the man and the general atmosphere of his office, that, later, he made inquiries about him. It developed that in 1928, the president of the company in question attended a conference in Holland, at which certain proposals were made in connection with the marketing of the particular commodity. He stated at the conference that if these proposals became effective, the price of the product would drop to a mere fraction of the current quotation; that this would prove embarrassing, perhaps ruinous, to many companies in the field. Despite his protests, the conference found in favour of the proposals. He returned home to his company, of whose capital stock he owned sixty thousand shares. As he had information which, for the time being, was not available to other stockholders of his company, nor to those who might purchase his own stock in the open market, he deemed it unfair to sell his shares; so he held them, doing all he could to prepare the affairs of the company so as to meet and withstand the shock he knew was coming. It was met admirably. To-day, the

company is prosperous, and he, its president, has surrounding and supporting him, a loyal and united group of stockholders, directors, and employees. That is one of thousands of ways of practising "obedience to the unenforceable".

As man tries to incorporate in his life this body of testimony, drawn from the sages of old, and revived by the Lodge Messenger of the last century, surely he will not be left to enter and travel alone the "small old path" leading toward immortality. How could he be a solitary wayfarer, when we consider Theosophy, whence it came and who brought it? As he tries to live according to these laws of the soul, tries to make choices on the side of nobility, bringing himself nearer to merging with the ideal, he sets up a claim upon all who have lived, and do live, by the same code. Not a personal claim, in the ordinary sense of the word, but one which is much deeper and more lasting: the claim which *Light on the Path* speaks of as the claim of co-nature.

G.M.W.K.

Think of God more frequently than you breathe.—EPICTETUS.

When we consider peace in and of itself, we realize that it is neither a saintly habit nor a virtuous action. It is to the soul what health is to the body. As health is not a distinct quality, but a harmonious equilibrium of bodily strength and feelings, so also peace results from the order that reigns in the soul.—R. P. RIONDEL.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Recorder was at his wits' end. Then, suddenly, an "inspiration": "What have you been reading?" he asked, apparently addressing his question to a row of superb lilies, planted along an edge of woodland. All day long it had been cruelly hot,—almost intolerable in town, and even here, in semi-country, hot enough to scorch the grass and to give every growing thing a consuming thirst. So, as the direct rays of the sun were now cut off by intervening trees and rising ground, one who loved these growing things and felt their silent suffering, was watering them for dear life, "that the Master might not suffer when he saw them", while we, inexpert, certain either to drown them with too much or to tantalize with too little, sat and watched and talked,—which, as some would say, is the way of men. But the Recorder, determined to get something out of it, perhaps for shame of the love and zeal he witnessed, not only repeated his question, but turned directly to the Historian for answer.

"Some books on recent history", was the response. "What is more, I have brought them with me: three books on the Abdication and Coronation; first, *Coronation Commentary*, by Geoffrey Dennis; second, *King Edward VIII: An Intimate Biography*, by Hector Bolitho; third, *The Magic of Monarchy*, by Kingsley Martin, editor of the English *New Statesman and Nation*. Of the last, our friend who is watering over there, in spite of intense fatigue, as if the fate of the world were the issue—and God knows, perhaps it is—of the last of my three books our friend remarked after reading it: 'Heaven help England if there are many men of that kind injecting their venom into unthinking minds!' For it is the aim of the author to 'debunk' the best in English tradition. His thesis is—implied when not explicit: 'All this Coronation business is childish flummery; a King is no better than I am; they made a little tin god of George V, which created an impossible situation for Edward VIII, and it is the job of all clear-seeing, sensible, glamour-proof men like myself, to enlighten the public before they make a little tin god of George VI.' There always have been men—Bernard Shaw is one of them—who cannot endure the idea that any human being should be considered superior, by birth, position, or character, to themselves. By some of these men, disparagement, direct or indirect, because it relieves the pangs of their envy, comes to be regarded as a mission. The editor of the *New Statesman and Nation* is of that kind. Fortunately, while he does his best to be poisonous, the cheapness of the man and of his envy is so transparent, that no one who reads his book, unless suffering already from the same moral disease, could fail to be disgusted. Readers of the QUARTERLY can judge for themselves. In our last (July) issue, we reprinted an editorial, entitled 'The Lord's Anointed', from the London *Times*. That editorial naturally aroused the resentment of a man with the mission of Mr. Martin. So, in an effort to drag things down to his own plane, he writes of it: 'If the *Times* leader-

writer had been dealing with his subject in an antiquarian instead of a reverential spirit, the natural title for his article would have been "George Barleycorn"'—because, 'anthropologically considered, the Coronation is a piece of magic, a magic ceremony carried out by the medicine-man, with the King as hero and victim, designed to bring fertility and prosperity', 'the same ritual that is used when Kings are crowned in Fiji, and when royal chiefs ascend the throne in darkest Africa'. What a mental content! One ought to feel sorry for him—and in a way I do. The stars he never sees; he sees mud. These self-satisfied illuminati, with the anthropological superstitions of forty years ago still serving as their stand-by, who have not yet waked to the fact that blood sacrifices and so forth, instead of being the origin of religious ritual (Masonic included), were the degenerate and perverted remains, from long antecedent civilizations, of spiritual truths which the Greater Mysteries revealed and the Lesser Mysteries dramatized,—these unhappy envious deceive no one except themselves, while the only people they delight are men and women of their own circle. It surprises me that a publishing firm like that of Thomas Nelson, should have lent itself to that sort of propaganda.

"The first book I named, *Coronation Commentary*, is different. It was written to sell, and for no other purpose. Its author writes for the man in the street, in 'journalese',—in short, snappy (what a word!) sentences. 'We demand', he says, 'a damnably high standard of personal morality from these people', i.e., from English Royalty. Quite obviously, Rumania is where *he* belongs. But it certainly is not on this account that the former King Edward VIII has brought an action for libel against both author and publisher in England. The paragraph that gave particular offence is said to have been this: Baldwin, it was whispered, 'would never be taking so strong a line unless there were *other* things'; and the author lists them: 'Things done and said in his infatuation; his lover's prodigality; his shrill King's rage against those who denied her to him. In moments of recourse to other sources of courage [insert Dutch, as being implied] as well. In hours of erratic, or erotic, obstinacy. Things left undone, in his infatuation. Duty neglected. Papers held up. Papers curiously, neo-Kaiserishly, annotated. . . .' Personally, I suspect that the paragraph which really precipitated the folly of Edward's action for libel was one which referred to the woman; this: in the opinion of his subjects, 'for Queen of England an itinerant shop-soiled twice-divorcee with two ex-husbands living was *not good enough*'. The characterization might well have jarred on a man whose own perceptions, at that point, were at least temporarily in 'occultation'.

"As might have been expected, such a book, for a brief period, became a best seller in America. I do not recommend it, either for information or entertainment. The tinsel tarnishes even as you look at it, though basically, when he deals with the former King, the man sees straight.

"My third book, *King Edward VIII*, by Hector Bolitho, is of a different kind. It is a serious account and study of Edward's life, from early youth to the day of his Abdication, and it traces, with some degree of frankness, the causes of his moral degeneration and collapse. The author is a New Zealander, but has lived

for years in England, at Windsor, and has written a number of books, including a well-known Life of the Prince Consort, entitled *Albert the Good*. He accompanied the former King on more than one of the latter's Empire and foreign tours. This close association with the subject of the author's study, ties his hands in at least one important respect, because, while not a guest, he was in any case 'permitted' to accompany the Prince (as Edward then was), and would doubtless feel bound *not* to draw on his personal observations, made possible only by his privileged position. His code in such matters would be different from that of a man like Linton Wells, the much-travelled American newspaper correspondent, of the 'good fellow' type, who, in his autobiography, *Blood on the Moon*, rather features his own heavy drinking and his own ability to stand up under it, and to whom it seems quite natural, therefore, to mention incidentally that the Prince 'danced every afternoon and evening, imbibed freely of his favourite tipple, which is whiskey-soda', aboard the *Berengaria*, when Wells accompanied him on the Prince's last visit to America,—the Long Island visit of painful memory. Wells writes: 'My memories of association with H.R.H. are pleasurable for he treated me with splendid consideration. I ate and drank, talked and walked with him and listened to his stories and with each passing day grew to like him more.' The two men had much in common; but habits grow on some people. In any case, Bolitho, as I have said, is of a very different type, and while expressing admiration for qualities which the Prince revealed in earlier years, such as his modesty, simplicity, and unfailing consideration for others, he does not hesitate to speak of 'the strange changes which came before his abdication, when he seemed to turn against his own kindly instincts'. His father's strong disapproval of the Prince's intimacy with Mrs. Simpson (and what father or mother would not have disapproved!), simply made him 'secretive, stubborn and more self-willed than ever'. Later, during his brief reign as Edward VIII,—

> It seemed that his judgment was no longer calm and, instead of finding peace and grace in his infatuation [for Mrs. Simpson], he found only a means of bringing distress to his staff and disappointment to the servants who had always found him, in the past, to be a considerate and friendly master. He became a piteous figure as he estranged himself from those who served him and who had respected him. Some who saw him murmured that there was a fault in his reason, and they wondered how far he was bringing his country to peril.

"It so happens", the Historian continued, "that I can confirm, from independent sources, the statement I have just read to you, for I have the best of reasons to believe that his temper became ungovernable, not, perhaps, when dealing with Baldwin, the Prime Minister, but in his relations with his staff—men of his own age, who for years had been his intimate friends. These men were not stern moralists (far from it, in some cases), but, because they were his friends, they almost certainly intimated that he was making a fool of himself, thereby bringing upon themselves explosions of uncontrolled fury.

"The author makes it clear that the Prince's decay was gradual, and did not culminate until after the intimacy with Mrs. Simpson, a year or two before the

death of his father, George V,—whose end was, in my opinion, undoubtedly hastened by grief over this entanglement, which, even then, had become a scandal in informed circles. As early as 1925, however, self-will and self-indulgence had done much of their work of destruction. Bolitho says that the Prince, on his way back from the Argentine, wrote to his father that if he were not allowed to follow his own way thereafter, he would renounce his rights and settle in one of the Dominions. Bolitho adds:

> The tragedy of his isolation had already begun. His stubbornness was alleviated by his great charm, his sympathy and his desire to do what was right. But he discounted his powers by turning from advice and whenever possible, playing a lone hand. His scattered experience of men had not taught him the value of quiet conference, and his restlessness and superficial view of human nature still debarred him from realizing the difference between popularity and respect.

"He still desired 'to do what was right'; but it does not take long for constantly indulged self-will to reach the stage at which whatever *I* want *is* right. It is largely because Edward's *débâcle*, properly understood, is a universal warning, that it seems worth while to refer to his case at some length and to take advantage of Bolitho's study. Older students of Theosophy have hurled themselves in vain against similar threatened downfalls, so they ought to know the symptoms, from first to last; but is there one of us who can wisely count himself safe, at any stage and at any age, from disasters at least as fatal? Truly, 'the way to be safe is never to feel secure'.

"It is still suggested occasionally in the American press—although, as Bolitho says, it is 'a crazy view'—that Baldwin, the Archbishop of Canterbury and others, conspired to get rid of Edward as King, and forced his abdication upon him; but anyone who reads the speeches of those men at the time of Edward's accession, cannot fail to see that Baldwin sincerely believed that the shock of King George's death, and Edward's new responsibilities, would cause a change of heart and of behaviour, while the Archbishop spoke more cautiously, with little hope and less enthusiasm,—the explanation being that George V had called upon the aged Prelate, as an old family friend, to support his own ineffective remonstrances against Edward's intimacy with Mrs. Simpson. The appeal and protest of a devoted father, as well as his own, having failed, the Archbishop could not possibly have felt very hopeful, although he continued bound in duty to serve and support him so far as he could.

"No one conspired against Edward VIII; he conspired against himself; he made his own position impossible; he everlastingly disgraced himself in the eyes of all right-thinking men. That Baldwin, the Archbishop, and, for that matter, everyone in England who knew the facts, breathed a deep sigh of relief when at last they were rid of him, goes without saying: they were inexpressibly thankful *that he had removed himself*."

"*À-propos de rien*", the Student now remarked, "it was reported in the American press, the *New York Times* included, not long after the former King had joined Mrs. Simpson in France, but a few weeks before the 'marriage', that he had abandoned the use of whiskey at her behest, and was limiting himself to

wine and beer; and this statement seems to have been given out by their host, Mr. Rogers, who was acting as their intermediary with the newspaper men who still swarmed in attendance."

"For a variety of reasons, all of them more or less obvious", the Historian replied, "I do not see that that affects the fundamentals of the situation in the least. As a matter of fact, some of the worst moral failures I have ever known, due primarily to self-will and its indulgence, have been those of total abstainers."

"Another book, which devotes a long and very interesting chapter to the Abdication, is *Ordeal in England*, by Sir Philip Gibbs", the Philosopher volunteered. "The chapter is entitled, 'The Crisis of the Crown'. It is graphically written, by a reporter of conversations and impressions who is an expert at that sort of thing, and who related the reactions, day by day during the Crisis, of men he met in all walks of life in England. It is a really valuable record, and shows how splendidly sane and sound and free from sentimentality, the almost universal reaction was. On all sides, in clubs, among young men of the Air Force, waiters in hotels, girl accountants,—the verdict was, 'We believed in him—and he's let us down. We gave him our loyalty and he's let us down: he's a quitter.' When it was all over, Gibbs says, 'something else happened in the English mind'.

It was anger. It was not anger because the King had got into trouble with a married woman, nor anger because the King's friends seemed to be a poor lot—according to the Archbishop [who was right]—nor anger because he wished to marry 'beneath him', as some of them said, but anger because he had 'chucked his job'.

"Then Gibbs quotes: 'He preferred that damn woman to England and the whole blinking Empire. He ought to have held on to his job, even if it meant chucking that wench'—though I doubt, incidentally, whether 'wench' was the term employed. Crude language in any case; yet it does not alter the essential facts to say: he had to choose between self-indulgence and duty, and he chose self-indulgence. Such an old, old story: he wanted to be happy in his own way, regardless of all else."

Said an Old Member: "This notion that some people have, that their right to personal happiness is entitled to precedence over everything else, including their most solemn obligations, always reminds me of General Ludlow's story of Talleyrand and the young man, who, in excuse for something he had done, protested: *Mais il me faut vivre!* (But I must live!). *Jeune homme, je ne vois pas la nécessité* (Young man, I do not see the necessity), was the biting but all-comprehensive reply."

"Very much to the point", the Philosopher agreed; "and a good summary of what seems to have been the instinctive reaction in England. It is Gibbs himself, in his book, who supplies the sentimentality, and doubtless he represents others besides himself,—a small minority; but all his books are like that.

"This is a change of subject, but now that I have mentioned Gibbs's book, I may as well finish with it. *Ordeal in England* is, primarily, a wail over England's re-arming, and a plea to the British people to believe that Hitler's intentions are purely pacific. England's re-arming, he says, invites war, which is the

exact opposite of the truth, for as every man of intelligence in Europe knows, if it had not been for England's sudden awakening after Italy's Ethiopian brigandage, and for the readiness of Parliament to vote practically unlimited funds for the immediate strengthening of the Army, Navy and Air force, Europe would have been a shambles many months ago. The talk of statesmen, the hysterical appeals of Pacifists, and the fatuous refusal of British governments to look facts in the face, had made peace almost impossible: Europe was toppling on the edge of the precipice. The instant England announced her determination to re-arm, Hitler and Mussolini drew back, almost sobered, while the rest of Europe, for the first time in years, dared to hope that these two wolf-like neighbours would perhaps think better of it,—would in any case think twice before precipitating a conflict the outcome of which, *thanks solely to England's re-armament*, would now be doubtful.

"As to Gibbs's assurance that Hitler seeks peace and pursues it,—what is the matter with such people, supposed to be educated, that they write, and urge others to act, as if they were totally ignorant of history? Explain it as you choose—either on the theory that Germany is a megalomaniac, or the victim of a persecution complex, or a plain bandit, even as the Afridis are bandits—the fact remains that she has invaded France time after time, with fire and sword and wanton, monstrous outrage, and that it is as certain as the rising of to-morrow's sun that she will do so again, just as soon as Hitler's General Staff give him the signal. For the moment, he *does* want peace; but that is solely because he is not quite ready for war. As against that, England and France want peace, just as ardently as the United States wants it.

"Gibbs advocates a method of preventing war which is chimerical,—a sort of improved League of Nations, 'a new Commonwealth of Nations', with an International Police to enforce the decrees of a supreme Court of Justice and Equity. Suppose, for instance, that this had been in effect when 'sanctions' proved ineffective to prevent Italy's seizure of Ethiopia. Germany, having a private understanding with Italy, to their mutual advantage, would have refused to participate, no matter how bound by treaty; England, France, the other European nations, would have been called upon, presumably, to send contingents—where? To land in France and invade Italy viâ the Alps? Russians, Belgians, Poles, Scandinavians, Englishmen, Frenchmen, fighting fraternally side by side under a single command! Whose command? Supposedly, some Bulgarian or Dutch general would be elected, so as to preserve 'neutrality'! And the preceding election: can you imagine the wire-pulling, the intrigue, the bitterness? Remember that the electors—the representatives of the nations and the controlling authority—would be men like our Senators, who represent our own different States. Do we not know enough of what this means to realize the impossibility of obtaining unbiased decisions? And even if each representative were capable of ignoring the selfish interests and the clamour of his own nation, and could rise above racial prejudice and his political instincts,—if there were *honest* difference of opinion, as there well might be over China in present circumstances, how could you expect English or French contingents to fight

in a cause which the government, and people back of them, believed to be unjust and wrong? It must be remembered also that the burden of any such Police duty would fall on the British Navy and French Army, which are now free to act as the conscience and judgment of their own nation may decide. Is it likely they would willingly surrender their right to decide why and for what they are prepared to die? Can any sane American wish to place our naval and military forces at the disposal of a committee in Geneva, presided over by De Valera or his equivalent, and consisting of a Turk, a Spaniard, a Serb, a Rumanian, a Portuguese, a Russian, a Chinaman, a Brazilian,—even if Senator Borah, or another of his kind, were on the committee also? The idea is absurd; and yet Gibbs and others, in most respects rational, are advocating it as practicable. At best it is a psychic, and therefore perverted anticipation, of that far-off day when high chêlas will be Kings of the different nations, presided over by their Adept Emperor.

"Meanwhile we have to face things as they are, and especially human nature as it is,—which is the factor Gibbs ignores. If we do this, we shall realize that while all civilized people hate war as a barbarous method of settling disputes—and it was Sherman, a great soldier, who said that 'War is Hell'—so long as there are armed freebooters and housebreakers in the world, the honest people, the civilized, must be prepared to fight for their lives; otherwise they would be exterminated, and only the brigands would survive. If this would make for human progress, or for the coming of God's Kingdom on earth,—I give it up. In any case, the vast majority of mankind know better; so of necessity we shall have wars until the righteous inherit the earth. In fact, the reign of the Adept Emperor can only come as the result of his victory in a war such as the world has never known. We have read of the 'white horse', 'and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering and to conquer'; and he was called 'Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war'. It will indeed be a long time before evil is extirpated, and before nations will joyfully accept, with faith, the control of presiding Wisdom. Meanwhile, evil and unscrupulous men will make wars inevitable and necessary, unless as I have said, the righteous surrender righteousness,—which Heaven forbid."

There could be no questioning that conclusion, so the Recorder turned to the Student: "And what have you been reading?" he asked. The Student replied that as there had been discussion recently in the "Screen" of one or more contemporary "best sellers", he had decided to read one that is now out of date, but which is still frequently mentioned for its outstanding merit, namely, *A Passage to India*, by E. M. Forster, first published in America in 1924.

"As a rule I dislike novels", he said, "preferring records of actual, instead of imaginary life—preferring biographies and autobiographies to fiction. But *A Passage to India* is remarkable in more ways than one. The author convinces you that his characters are real people, even when they do or say idiotic things. It is brilliantly written, full of humour, and of fine irony unspoiled by malice. As seems to be inevitable in a modern novel, the author occasionally uses ex-

pressions which are needlessly explicit; he could have conveyed his meaning—as Thackeray or George Eliot or Scott or other greater novelists would have done—just as well, without flinging the thing in one's face. I cannot help asking myself in such cases: Does he talk that way to his daughters, or to the daughters of his friends? However, this book is refinement itself in comparison with best sellers of more recent date; and the real fault that I find with it is that it is misleading as a picture of life.

"The story revolves around the relations of English officials and other English people, resident in India, with the educated natives, chiefly Mohammedan. In the first place, all the author's native characters are Bengalis, and the large majority of his readers will not realize—and he in no way helps them to realize—that Bengalis differ as widely from Punjabis or Kashmiris as Bretons from Provençals, or as a typical New York Catholic differs from his co-religionist of Louisiana. In other words, while he emphasizes the difference in nature between Mohammedans and Hindus, he is misleading in so far as he implies that all Mohammedans are more or less like his Bengali Mohammedans; and we repeat that while both Bretons and Provençals are Roman Catholic, their characters are as far apart as the poles. I say this in defence of the best in India, because Bengal does *not* represent the best.

"In the second place, his English in India, both men and women, are common, ill-bred, pretentious, and, as individuals, would be as insufferable in England as he shows them to be in India. In brief, they are cads. Why depict people of that kind as if they were fairly representative of the average? Life is not like that. There are gentle people—even saints and heroes—as well as sycophants and bullies. The author, obviously trying to be fair to the English residents and to the educated natives alike, actually is unfair to both. Yet his spirit and purpose are fair, so that his unintentional unfairness does not offend. He is detached; he tells the truth as he sees it; and he is genuinely an artist. Further, while he is probably a Liberal in the English sense, and therefore would be mildly horrified by what I regard as the lesson or moral of his book, that lesson, as I see it, clearly is: Indians of all creeds and races, practically without exception, recognize and honour an aristocrat, and would accept his benevolent despotism gladly. Democracy in any form is foreign to the instinct, genius, and tradition of the Indian peoples. Chaos would result—to some extent has already resulted—from the attempt to introduce English (American?) theories of government into a country built on totally different lines. The attitude let us say of the late Duke of Northumberland to his tenants, should be trained into those young Englishmen who aspire to become members of the Indian Civil Service. A College should be established in England, under Government auspices, for that purpose, with another in India to provide finishing instruction. Students should be taught, not only two or three Indian languages, such as Hindustani, Punjabi, Pushtu, etc., but the good points in Indian religions and philosophies, while re-inforcing their original faith in Christianity (Indians respect adherence, outer as well as inner, to an inherited religion. Kitchener in India, was punctilious in Church attendance).

"To treat all Indians alike, is to insult most of them. Naturally, none should be treated with discourtesy. On the contrary, part of the training of every member of the Indian Civil Service should include a course in manners, with instruction in those shades of difference in the manner to be used when dealing with different types of native. The manners of the late Maharana of Udaipur, a Rajput, who traced his descent from the Sun, which means from the gods, are said to have been so perfect that he filled Viceroy after Viceroy with secret or avowed envy. Nothing short of that should be accepted as the ideal for those who govern India. The Indian does *not* resent superiority. On the contrary, he admires, even reveres it. What he does resent, and pardonably, is an assumption of superiority when this has no foundation in fact.

"I concluded, however, that to expect anything really satisfactory, really worth-while, in any best seller, would be foolish on the face of it, seeing that it must have appealed both to the professional critics and to the mob. So I shall not carry my investigation further, but shall leave the dead to bury their dead."

"But you admire Kipling", someone objected, "and he, at one time, was a best seller."

"I do admire him", the Student replied, "but Kipling wrote a lot of trash as well as masterpieces. He was a prolific writer, and, in the early days, avowedly ground out 'pot-boilers' because he needed the money,—as, for instance, to help his parents: the best of motives. One of the most worth-while things he ever did, *A Book of Words*, consisting of addresses he gave shortly before and during the Great War, brimming over with his accumulated wisdom, will never be a best seller: most people would think it dull."

"Well, what else have you read", prodded the Recorder when the Student paused.

The response was a laugh, and then: "I can't run on for ever! But one other book I should like to mention,—the *Vie de Jésus*, by François Mauriac. The author, as a member of the French Academy, is necessarily a man of letters of high standing and considerable fame. He is a brilliant writer, and draws a vivid and in some ways daring picture of the Master's life and death in Palestine. I say daring, because, although Mauriac is a practising and devout Catholic, he thinks for himself, and does not scruple to depart from orthodox interpretation when he feels like it. Perhaps that is why my edition of his book does not contain the customary *Nihil Obstat*, etc. of his Church. This does not mean that I think he is always right when he departs from customary interpretations. He is quite obviously wrong in certain cases, as, for instance, in his statement that while the Master had, at times, taught his disciples in secret, he preached the Sermon on the Mount to the multitude. You will remember Matthew's explicit statement that the Master, seeing the great multitudes who had followed him from Galilee, and from Judæa, and from beyond Jordan, went up into a mountain, and that, 'when he was set', his disciples came to him; whereupon he taught them, saying 'Blessed are the poor in spirit', and so forth. This is not without importance, because 'the duty of another is full of danger', as the *Gîta* says, and counsels of perfection are likely to lead the man-in-the-street

to feel that religion demands the impossible. The Sermon on the Mount was addressed to would-be disciples, and to their successors for ever.

"Reverting, however, to the general character of Mauriac's book", the Student resumed, "it would be difficult to praise it too highly. The author deserves our particular gratitude for having portrayed Christ as human,—not as the 'pale Galilean', but as human and virile. Further, he realizes clearly, as very few in his Church realize, that Christianity *is* Christ, and that ritual, ceremony, even the Sacraments, are nothing except as means to an end, that end being the love of Christ. Quoting, 'Abide in my love . . . that my joy may remain in you', he comments: 'What need had these men, his disciples, to understand more than that? The whole of the New Law is contained in one word—the word more profaned than any other in all the languages of earth—the one word: love.' That such a book has had an immense circulation in France, is one of the hopeful signs of the times."

"Which reminds me", said the Recorder, baiting his hook with care—it had been such an exhausting day, and no one wanted to talk—"it is quite some time since the 'Screen' reported comment on the international situation. Perhaps you", turning to the Wanderer, "will be good enough to supply it".

The Wanderer, not often with us during recent years, began by saying that the surface confusion is so great—the wrong nations often representing right principles and so forth—that he did not believe anyone short of an Adept could see the real tendencies until they could be reviewed in retrospect. "Consider, for example, the case of Italy and Abyssinia,—and I know something of Abyssinia" [there are very few countries of which the Wanderer does not know 'something']—"all that was visible on the surface a year or two ago was the unspeakable outrage perpetrated by Italy against an unarmed people led by their Emperor,—a man of superior character and a sincere patriot; and what was seen on the surface was seen truly, *so far as it went*. What was not seen was the purpose of the Lords of Karma as it is becoming evident to-day. First, however, consider the facts of the situation prior to the *dénouement*: on the one hand Italy, whipped by Mussolini into the attitude of a roaring lion 'seeking whom he may devour'; on the other hand, Abyssinia, a congeries of different peoples and races, nominally governed by an Emperor, who was, unfortunately, quite unable to control the majority of his deputies,—men occupying the position of feudal Barons with absolute authority in remote regions. Many of these men spent their lives plotting against the Emperor in the hope of fighting their way to the throne. The country was a sink of iniquity, dirt and disease. The Emperor knew it; was anxious to institute reforms, including the abolition of slavery, but had at his disposal no central army able to cope with the armed forces of his recalcitrant Barons. From the international standpoint, the complicating feature of the situation was that most of the border 'Barons' were marauders (the history of Wales and Scotland should make this understandable), for whose incursions into neighbouring territory the Emperor was held responsible. Alleged, or real, incursions into Italian territory constituted the pretext used by Mussolini for his invasion and gas-bombing conquest.

"Aware of all those facts, and of many more; foreseeing the inevitable outcome of the fighting, I suspect that the Lords of Karma also foresaw how Italy, as a result of her triumph, would be bled white, while the Abyssinians, in nearly all cases, would benefit. For their own protection the Italians are compelled to build roads, to drain swamps, to enforce hygienic measures against the horrible diseases of the country, as well as to maintain an army of occupation and innumerable skilled and semi-skilled labourers,—all at immense cost, both in money and in man-power (the toll in disease will be fearful), and without hope of return for a number of years. That Italy cannot afford it, and that her people are finding the burden of taxation almost unendurable, is known to everyone. Further, if Italy were involved in a European war, her troubles in Abyssinia would be increased tenfold, not only because of the difficulty of supplying her troops there, but because the Abyssinians would almost certainly regard Italy's embarrassments elsewhere as their opportunity to rebel. In brief, Italy, in my opinion, is and will remain the loser, as she deserves, while the Abyssinians, in appearance the victims, will gain at Italy's expense. They will gain in every way. The Abyssinian Church, for instance, was degenerate; its priests were self-satisfied, lethargic, exclusive, uneducated: it will wake them up, and do them a world of good to come into competition with the Church of Rome, backed, as that is, by the civil and military authorities. The Abyssinian priests made no effort whatever to convert the lower, conquered races, who form a majority of the population, and among whom the vilest forms of black magic were practised with impunity. The Italian missionaries will certainly wish to check that, and, solely because they will be supported by the military, they may meet with success.

"In a sense, therefore, Abyssinia *needed* to be invaded, *needed* just what she has got,—and could not have been subdued by Italy unless that need had existed. But this does not exonerate Italy in the least. The whole principle involved is made beautifully clear by the Christian Master: 'It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man [or nation] by whom the offence cometh.'

"The lesson is invaluable if we will take it to heart; it enables us to realize that Right, not Might, always triumphs in the end. Not that it should soften our indignation when wrong is done—far from it; but it should enable us to adore the beauty and the balance of divine Law; to see how the Lords of Karma perpetually bring good out of evil, how the perpetrators of injustice and outrage reap their punishment, and how their victims are compensated. So often men without understanding and of little faith, are tempted to cry aloud, 'O God, if truly you are God, interfere you must, prevent this evil you must, for otherwise no man can believe any more in the loving or righteous governance of things!' They expect to understand from day to day,—to see as God sees! A very little humility would teach them better. The most fleeting glimpse of the divine purpose—which is the divine compassion—must fill the heart with wonder and with worship."

"Is there a statesman anywhere in the world, calling himself a Christian",

the Student asked, "who really believes in his Master as Ruler, and who strives to learn and to carry out *his* purposes? None that I know of. Partly from vanity, but chiefly from lack of faith and in some cases from despair, they have concluded that they and they alone must solve the world's problems, and thus, so far as they can, have taken the Rulership into their own hands, out of his. Hence the frightful confusion."

"What of the situation in China?" someone asked the Wanderer.

"On the one hand, an utterly demoralized people, most of them without the least idea of what is going on, the vocal element among them aping American ways (Columbia University responsible for much of it), with a large admixture of Moscow's philosophy and Russian gold, despising the ways of their ancestors,—hopelessly degenerate. On the other hand, Japan: ambitious, arrogant, unscrupulous, but rightly hating Bolshevism, and rightly convinced that if she does not take control, Russia will. If you could isolate Japan and China, you might urge with reason, 'Let them fight it out; it is their business, not ours'. Unfortunately, thanks to Science and to the elimination of time and space, in large measure, as controlling factors, you cannot isolate Japan and China: their quarrel has become the quarrel of political parties within both France and England—the Right (Conservative) favouring Japan, the Left (Radical) favouring China, partly because Hitler and Mussolini, inherently wrong, are right in their detestation of Bolshevism, and must, therefore, support Japan. England would like to prevent the destruction of Shanghai and of her immense commercial interests, but cannot do this effectively as it would mean sending more of her fleet into Asiatic waters than is possible, considering the standing threat of Germany in the North Sea, and of Italy in the Mediterranean. Talk about a muddle! But was it not foretold, ages ago, that confusion would be the outstanding characteristic of Kali Yuga, the present Age of Darkness?

"Remembering that Russia at one extreme, and Germany and Italy at the other, now represent the opposite poles on the same plane of exactly the same evil; remembering that you cannot back either China or Japan without backing either one or the other of those manifestations of the devil,—what have you to choose between? Now you will see why I spoke of Abyssinia first, for no matter which way the moral balance may seem to tip between the widespread contending forces, with less responsible nations, such as England and the United States, caught, as it were, between the devil and the deep sea, we may be certain that the Lords of Karma, ever at work, will bring good out of it, will see that justice is done, and that from all these tribulations will arise cause for thanksgiving and praise. Meanwhile, if those in authority in England, France, and America, would do from day to day the thing that is obviously right in itself, with less thought of expediency and more of principle,—they would be less likely to get in the way of divine justice.

"Spain? Spain is less of a problem. The government now operating from Valencia, the supporters of which are described as 'Loyalists' in the American press, is Bolshevist seasoned with a considerable sprinkling of Anarchist. Their opponents, the 'Rebels' under Franco, represent the more decent element in

Spain,—a mixed lot of Royalists, Fascists, Constitutionalists, with all others who prefer old-fashioned law and order to the bloody despotism of the Communists and the hell-let-loose of the Anarchists. Anyone with knowledge of the facts must hope that Franco will win,—though it is lamentable that he was obliged to call on Moroccan troops to aid him, and to accept the active help of Mussolini and, to a lesser extent, of Hitler. It seems, however, as if a clear-cut issue anywhere in the international field, were at present against the rules of the game,—as if the terms of the struggle between the White Lodge and the Powers of Evil *required* a sufficient element of confusion to mislead those who are inclined, if not anxious, to be misled. In that respect, the World War made the choice so easy that it ought to have been inevitable; the day for that has passed: the choice now involves a test of right perception."

"But have not both 'Loyalists' and 'Rebels' been equally cruel?" asked one of our visitors.

"No", the Wanderer answered: "I can assure you that has not been the case. Both sides have been cruel, but much of the cruelty of the 'Rebels' has been in retaliation for the unspeakable and fiendish cruelties of their Bolshevist opponents, whose deliberate outrages on nuns, crucifixion of priests, and so forth, have naturally driven the followers of Franco, most of whom are Catholics, to a state not unlike that of some of the early American settlers when retaliating against the Indians for their barbarous treatment of white men—and women—when the Indians had them in their power. It then became a case of: 'Torturers! Now we'll show *you*!' Yet the truth of course is that the Spaniards, throughout history, have shown themselves to be abnormally cruel, not only in days when that was common, but in their successive civil wars since 1812, when they first began to play with 'Liberal' Constitutions. That Bull-fights should be their national sport reveals all that is necessary under that head. See the blood-lust surge into a young woman's eyes as she watches one of these prolonged butcheries, and you will never forget it."

"How do you account for such cruelty? Spain has produced great saints."

"In a sense, the very fact you have mentioned accounts for the cruelty. Are not all evils the perversion of spiritual powers? The great Spanish saints and mystics, such as Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, revealed the spiritual potentiality of their race. They were passionate in their devotion and self-giving, and yet were able to combine this with common sense and marvellous restraint. When that potentiality fails to manifest at the spiritual pole, and is absorbed by the animal nature and thus perverted, the passion easily becomes ferocity, and the self-restraint, cold and calculating cruelty. They are a people of extremes; they are saints or devils. They have turned Spain (not for the first time) into a hell such as Dante saw and pictured; let us hope that, as a result of their self-inflicted torment, they will ultimately rebound to 'the things that belong unto their peace',—ages hence I fear, for this, as it is not the first, will not be the last of their fratricidal struggles."

"Very interesting as an explanation,—as a philosophical explanation", commented the same visitor, perhaps rather dryly. "But meanwhile? If I were an

English naval officer, I should object to being torpedoed by unknown submarines in times of 'peace', and if I were of the mercantile marine, I should expect the navy of my country to protect my ship, or help me to go armed against pirates."

Now the Wanderer is a mystic—with connections; but because he is a real mystic, he is quite unlike the type that usually goes by that name. There was a Lion of the tribe of Juda—no longer of Juda—and the Wanderer belongs to that ilk. Very quietly, then, he replied to our visitor's hint of impatience:

"That is a simple matter, if handled properly. We have been trying, through our own channels, to get the British Admiralty to see the situation in simple terms. They leave too much to the diplomatists, who rely on conferences and talk. All that the Admiralty needs to do is to announce, quite casually, that until further notice the British submarines in the Mediterranean will be 'confined to barracks', as it were,—will not leave the harbours of Malta, Gibraltar, and so forth; then drop a broad hint to the French (nothing in writing) to do likewise. Such an announcement *might* catch the attention of Italy; might make her wonder 'what was up', might make her very cautious. Then, as soon as all British and French submarines have been accounted for, the Admiral in command of the Mediterranean fleet should give oral instructions to every unit under him to scour the sea and to sink any and every submarine sighted or heard, duly reporting to him on the nature of the preceding attack made or threatened or *anticipated* (do you understand me?). In any case, those in command of the units would *not* be slow to understand, and would act, and write their reports, accordingly. One or two submarines 'missing' would be enough; there would be no more trouble; there would be peace, perfect peace: every submarine in that big sea would stay at home."

"But the loss of life!" expostulated another of our visitors, more by habit than anything else.

"The crews of one or two submarines", the Wanderer replied tranquilly: "it is their business to die, not to live; and they would die in a good cause, for they would have been instrumental in preventing the horrors of a European war involving, probably, the death by poison gas of thousands of women and children. 'Do unto others as you would be done by.' Surely, if you had the opportunity to prevent such major horrors, you would be glad to be one of those, thus drowned sacrificially?"

Our visitor looked doubtful. The Wanderer smiled. "Dying", he said, "is of small importance; we have died so many times already. What is of supreme importance is how and why we die. The Lord takes care of the rest."

T.

REPRINT

A TALK WITH MY BRAIN[1]

ONE day it occurred to me that there were several matters that I needed to discuss with my brain, and at the first convenient opportunity when I was alone, I brought them up:

You do not seem to apprehend your proper position. You should understand that you have no independent life apart from me, or at least a temporary one only, and that your real interests and mine are identical. You seem to think and act as if you were a personage apart from me, with your own life to lead, and a fixed determination to do as you see fit. You insist upon your own ways, and these are often bad ways. You think what you believe to be your own thoughts, but which are really only wavelets from the ocean of thought that flow into your sphere. You refuse to take the trouble to control yourself in your thinking, so as to consider only your duty and what I may give you to think about. You are obstinate, you are confirmed in many evil habits, and above all you are lazy. It is time that you acquired some appreciation of the seriousness of existence and of your own special responsibilities. My brain listened to all this with more attention and patience than usual. Not once did it wander off on some flight of fancy, or become absorbed by some passing thought-form. But its reply was not so satisfactory.

If, it said, I have no life apart from you, if I am but your slave and instrument, why is it necessary for you to appeal to me to do what you want, and what I do not like? Why don't you use the powers which you say you possess, and compel me to obedience? I make my instrument, the physical body, do pretty much what I want. It has no will of its own. If I leave it for an instant it sleeps, or becomes what is called unconscious, and is but a lump of useless clay. I have none of the trouble with it, that you, who claim me as your instrument, seem to have with me. Why is it? I do not believe what you say. I believe I am an entity, with an existence independent of yours.

I replied sorrowfully that I very sincerely regretted hearing such a statement from him after all my labours to convince him to the contrary, for every

[1] This article by "G. Hijo", a *nom de plume* of Clement A. Griscom, is reprinted from *The Theosophical Forum* of March, 1900 (vol. V, No. 11, p. 202). The *Forum* preceded the QUARTERLY as mouthpiece of The Theosophica Society.

time he took this attitude the breach between us was widened and made more difficult to close; and once again I had to explain that our interests were really identical in this matter, and that those interests were to bring about a closer union, until finally we became one, our mutual consciousness merged, as it were, into a single, elevated, powerful and efficient whole; this again being but a ray or offshoot of the Absolute Consciousness comprising all things. So long as he thought of himself as a thing apart, so long was he setting up a barrier separating him from any higher life. If he persisted in such an attitude, when death withdrew the cohesive force now keeping us together, he would find himself deserted and alone, with nothing ahead of him but a monotonous and perhaps painful existence for a longer or shorter period, until such inherent force as was stored up in him, became exhausted. Then, I said, he would go out like a candle that has burned to a finish. On the other hand an identification of his interests with mine, a surrender of his bad habits, of his egoism and selfishness, would mean that upon death, instead of having his own life to lead until exhausted, he would go with me, as a part of me, to other planes of existence, there to complete and assimilate the experiences of the past life, before beginning yet another life on earth. This was his only chance for immortality. As for my not being able to coerce him in such a matter, while it might be a saving of force and energy and time, in one sense, if I could, yet in another it would be defeating the very object of evolution itself. It was necessary for me to acquire experience on all planes of existence. Before I could leave any plane behind it was necessary that I should have conquered that plane and all that pertains to it; that I should be its master, and the master of all in it. He had spoken of his control of the body. It was true. The purely physical body was in many ways his slave, although it was far from being absolutely mastered, as it still had some appetites and desires not yet fully controlled. But it was not he who had made this conquest; it was I, through him. And now I had also to control him, to have him subject to my will, to do with him what I liked, to silence him entirely when necessary, before I could pass on to other planes. I must be master of his plane, the mental plane; and the trouble lay in his not realizing that it was also to his best interests to help along this conquest which was a necessary part of his and my evolution. Again I explained that he was but an instrument given me to enable me to express myself on the mental plane, that his life and power and force were but what he derived from me, and that I was responsible for the use he made of these, and was benefited or injured by the addition he made to the stock of our common experience during this life. I knew that the very idea of his being controlled was repugnant to him, that it seemed like the complete surrender of his individuality for ever, but I had already explained that this was not really so and that as a matter of fact his only hope of immortality was through just this process, and I reminded him of the mysterious saying of the Master, that he who would find his life must lose it.

The strain of continuous attention here became too great to be borne, and my brain relaxed his effort and floated off in a maze of inconsequent and useless

thoughts. There was nothing for me to do but to wait patiently until he again recovered control of himself, and in the meantime I watched the panorama. He began as follows:

That was a queer saying; but wasn't it St. Paul who said that? I don't remember, never could remember quotations from the Bible. I wish I could have an experience like St. Paul's and have a voice out of the sky tell me what to do. It would be so much easier. I wonder if I should be alarmed. I don't believe I should. What was that? Oh! only a creak of the furniture. How it made my heart jump. I suppose it shows that my nerves are not fit for any real experience. I wonder if B—— hears internally? I notice he seems to be looking at nothing sometimes, with his attention fixed upon something inside. It must be great to hear internally. But then I suppose I should hear lots of things I didn't want to. I should hate to be told to give up smoking; I don't believe I would though, as smoking is said to keep away the elementals, and all occultists seem to smoke. I wonder if they are told to. I wish I had some more of that Virginia tobacco, it was the best I ever smoked. I did enjoy it last night after dinner. The dinner was pretty good, too, only the cook always spoils the mutton. That currant jelly was out of our own garden. I wish Thomas would grow more vegetables; they are so much better fresh than from the stores. That reminds me that I must buy some collars. I wish I had lots of money and then I would send someone to get me all the different kinds and I would not have to take any trouble. It must be lovely to be so rich that you do not have to think of these things. They are so degrading and they take up time that you might be devoting to higher things. That reminds me that I was getting a lecture from inside. I wonder where we were? Oh! yes, he had just said something about a quotation from St. Paul,—or was it Jesus? I don't remember which, oh! yes— . At this point the wandering attention of my brain was controlled and I resumed.

You have just given as fair an example of the way you spend most of your leisure time as one could wish. You can never expect to succeed in occultism or even in any worldly pursuit until you have better control of yourself and have acquired some powers of concentration and attention. You would like to hear internally. How can you expect to do so when you cannot keep your attention on your own thoughts for two minutes consecutively, let alone listen with the absorption and attention necessary to hear the still small voice of the Silence. You may be sure the inner Powers will not waste their time with you so long as you are likely to wander off in a perfectly aimless way in the middle of their discourse. Of course I was assuming that you were sufficiently purified to be able to reflect the things of the spirit at all. I do not believe you are, so long as your untrammeled thoughts turn naturally to yourself, and to your own comfort and aggrandizement, to being rich and prosperous. It shows that you are far from that condition of spiritual unselfishness that will alone enable you to communicate with higher planes.

But to return to the subject we were discussing before your attention wandered. I will tell you something you ought to know. After a period of rest

between two lives, I am projected, automatically as it were, into physical existence. I am incarnated in the environment to which I am entitled on account of my previous efforts; and you, my brain, are a part of my environment. You are one of the conditions that circumscribe and limit me, and it is my duty to endeavour to control and purify you. Only so can I wholly express myself on the physical plane. You, in this life, are what you are, entirely owing to the use or misuse I made of my brains in previous lives, and my brain in my next life will reflect the result of this. If, therefore, I maintain a continual effort to reform and soften you; if I mould you to my higher will; if I do my whole duty by you, you enter into my being as an integral part of it, and when next born anew my new brain will have that much less power to limit me, and will of itself be a better and finer instrument.

Remember that I who am speaking to you now am not some external spiritual force or entity, but a part of yourself to which you must try permanently to join yourself. My consciousness now is the sum total of the imperishable results of all my previous lives. Of course there is more in me than can express itself to you, or through you, but only so much as can express itself through you can be conscious on this plane. What I am on other planes you will never know until you become pure enough to reflect those planes, and this can only come about through long-continued and constantly sustained effort. Some day I may explain to you the internal processes and changes that take place as a result of these efforts, but even this most elementary fact in occultism you could not yet fully understand. It is enough for me to say now that it has to do with the formation of *the body of the mind*. At present, however, I want you to understand the real relationship that exists between us, who are yet but two parts of the same. I am so absolutely responsible for you, in such a full sense of those words, that you can apprehend the idea but in part. You do not think an idle thought, nor receive an impression, nor create an impulse to action or to inaction, nor feel a desire, or the lack of a desire, that I am not fully responsible for. Sooner or later I must pay for your mistakes, for your laziness, for your carelessness, and for your sins. You will readily see, therefore, that your actions are of paramount importance to me, and never for one instant will I relax my efforts to guide and control you. You may die before this is completed, in fact you surely will before it is perfectly done, and then I must begin the fight again with another brain, where we left off, until finally the battle is won. And great will be the reward of the personality in which this process is measurably completed, for it will become as one with the Divine, will in fact be a divine man among men. You see, therefore, what is the situation. Sooner or later, you, or some other brain that I shall obtain hereafter, must complete this process of purification and self-abnegation. Nor must you think that of you only, is required this sacrifice; I also in a higher sense must some day kill out all idea of separateness, and must merge my consciousness in the Universal Consciousness. But before I can do this I must have completed my evolution up to the plane where this is required; and until I am master of all planes below, until I am clothed with all the powers of nature,

I may not knock at the door of the larger life. Do you wonder then that I am incessant in my demands, and that my patience is as that of the gods; that failure discourages me not, nor does success exhilarate? I have Eternity before me for the task, and were it not for the urgings of suffering and the desire to be able to help others, I might let the slow but sure processes of evolution take their course, and not attempt to force the fighting. But the sorrow and pain and evil in the world appeal to me. I have suffered too, and I know what it is. I desire, therefore, with an intensity of desire of which your puny will is incapable, to do something to help raise the burdens of the world. There is no other way than this. Purify and elevate your own instrument, and then assist the eternal Powers of good to purify and elevate all others. There is your destiny, if you have the courage to grasp, and the endurance to hold on to it. Choose, therefore! Will you seize your divine heritage as is your inalienable right, or will you drift aimlessly down the stream of life, of no use to yourself or to anyone else in the universe, to perish miserably at the end of your allotted years?

The continued attention and sympathetic attitude of my brain had permitted a little gleam of spiritual fire to descend from higher planes, and I spoke with an earnestness and force that were not without influence.

There does not seem to be much choice, answered my brain.

There is but one choice possible in the end, I replied, but many prefer to postpone the choosing. All must some day begin the climbing of the ladder of life, and the sooner it is begun the sooner the weary journey is ended. But be not deceived. It is not a path of roses, but a dreary march, and for a long time there will be no end in sight. But the summit is there and can be reached, and then,—peace! We were silent for a time, each busy with his own thoughts, and then my brain asked what it should do.

Obey me, I said. I am what some men call your conscience, what others call your soul, and what the mystics of all ages have called by various names, divine fire, inner light, intuition. I shall tell you to do many difficult things, the chief of which will be your duty, but I shall not lead you astray for I am an infallible guide. The more you obey me, the better can I help you. The better you serve me, the more can I assist you. Remember always that in the words of one of the Great Ones, the light is much more anxious to reach you than you are anxious to reach the light. I will never desert you and will always stand ready with all the advice and encouragement that can be given you. I will be as tender and as loving as a mother with her first-born, and as inflexible as justice. You will suffer the torments of hell and you will have the reward of the blessed. You must care neither for wealth nor poverty, pleasure nor pain, happiness nor sorrow, praise nor blame, sickness nor health, and I will teach you to read the hearts of men, and will lay open before you the innermost secrets of nature. You may go down unknown to your grave, but you will awake to eternal life. Your life will be one of anguished striving, but the end is illimitable peace. Choose you, therefore, for the moment will pass, and the opportunity be lost.

And my brain answered gravely, Do with me what you will.

G. Hijo (Clement A. Griscom).

REVIEWS

Worship, by Evelyn Underhill; Harper & Brothers, New York, 1937; price, $3.50.

Religion, to students of Theosophy, is, as has often been said, the greatest of the experimental sciences. There is need for faith, else the experiments will never be performed; but the saints—who became saints because they had a love that commanded the needed faith and courage—all are at one in their testimony of the results. Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For no other single fact in the whole history of human consciousness, is the evidence more consistent than for the reality and transforming power of mystical experience.

It is twenty-six years since Evelyn Underhill's *Mysticism* was first published, calling attention, as The Theosophical Society had long done, to this unanimity of testimony, and analyzing the experience upon which it was based. It was a brilliant performance by a very able intellect. But in the intervening years, Miss Underhill's work has become more than that. She has sought steadfastly. Year after year has seen the publication of some new study or series of addresses, bearing its own evidence of a seeking heart as well as of a questing mind; and as these are reviewed in sequence, they manifest a development which, on its own plane and in its own way and degree, tells as surely of the responsive action of the spirit as any argument she advances in her texts. Dry bones have been breathed upon, and, in consequence, her later work expresses a breadth of understanding sympathy, and carries an inspiration and incentive, which the initial volume lacked. Her whole approach to her subject has become more theosophic,—as witness the following passages, taken from the Preface of the book before us:

> Some of the friends and fellow-students who have read these chapters have been inclined to blame me for giving too sympathetic and uncritical an account of types of worship which were not their own. It has been pointed out to me that I have failed to denounce the shortcomings of Judaism with Christian thoroughness, that I have left almost unnoticed primitive and superstitious elements which survive in Catholic and Orthodox worship, that I have not emphasized as I should the liturgic and sacramental shortcomings of the Protestant sects. But my wish has been to show all these as chapels of various types in the one Cathedral of the Spirit; and dwell on the particular structure of each, the love which has gone to their adornment, the shelter they can offer to many different kinds of adoring souls, not on the shabby hassocks, the crude pictures, or the paper flowers. Each great form of Christian cultus is here regarded, to

use an Ignatian simile, as a "contemplation to procure the love of God": for its object is to lead human souls, by different ways, to that act of pure adoration which is the consummation of worship.

The fact that each of these types has its particular short-comings, that each tends to exaggerate one element in the rich Christian complex at the expense of the rest, that all are liable to degeneration and are seldom found in their classic purity, is merely what our human contingency would lead us to expect. Yet in spite of all this, in every form of worship—even the least adequate—the positive element, man's upward and outward movement of adoration, self-oblation and dependence, exceeds in importance the negative element which is inevitably present with it. For the positive element is always a response to some aspect of Reality, some incitement of God, however dimly understood and imperfectly obeyed. The negative element is the effect of our creaturely situation; immersed in the world of things, yet endowed with a certain capacity for the world of eternity. Thus a certain confusion between the sensible signs by means of which we worship, and the supra-sensible truths they represent, attends all man's efforts to embody the deep and delicate realities of his spiritual life. Therefore in each type of worship here studied, I have tried to find these realities, and bring them into relief; to interpret as much as I am able, and to criticize as little as I can. It is only too easy to recognize and denounce the barbarous aspects of sacrifice, or the magical tendencies which dog sacramental religion; but this simple exercise tells us nothing worth knowing about worship.

So far, we have the familiar attitude and approach of The Theosophical Society; but then there follows a sentence which no student of Theosophy could have written: "*What matters is the fact that under these unpromising appearances we can discern the humble beginnings of man's response to the attraction of God; the birth of Faith, Hope and Charity*".

The publishers advertise this study of worship as Miss Underhill's most important work since *Mysticism*. It is not less noteworthy as an intellectual achievement, for the whole range of Christian worship—ritual and symbol, sacrament and sacrifice, liturgical and prophetic, personal and traditional—has been unified within the purview of a consistent philosophy. The first part of the book is devoted to making clear that philosophy; the second part to illustrating it, through a review of Jewish and early Christian worship, and successive chapters devoted to the main Christian denominations, from the Orthodox and Catholic to the Society of Friends. Worship is defined, in its deepest sense, as the response of man to the Eternal, or, since all nature worships, as the response of the creature to the Eternal. It is thus in all its forms, theocentric, not something which originates in man as a subjective development, but man's response to something which he perceives pre-existing above and beyond him. Miss Underhill insists upon this throughout the book—as, indeed, through all her books. Thus she writes:

That awed conviction of the reality of the Eternal over against us, that awareness of the Absolute, that sense of God, which in one form or another is the beginning of all worship, whether it seems to break in from without, or to arise within the soul, does not and cannot originate in man. It comes to him where he is, a message from another order; God disclosing Himself to and in His creation "by diverse portions and in diverse manners" conditioned by the limitations of the humble creature He has made. It is in fact a Revelation, proportioned to the capacity of the creature, of something wholly

other than our finite selves, and not deducible from our finite experience: the splendour and distinctness of God. Therefore the easy talk of the pious naturalist about man's approach to God, is both irrational—indeed plainly impudent—and irreverent; unless the priority of God's approach to man be kept in mind.

This throws into sharp contrast the assumption, implicit in the sentence we italicized in the passage quoted earlier, that religion evolves from the false to the true, that magic and sacrifice mark the birth and childhood of religion, rather than its degeneracy, and that from them are born Faith, Hope and Charity. This is the fallacy of *The Golden Bough*, and for it no evidence of any kind is anywhere adduced. However well established the doctrine of evolution may be held to be, as applying to our natural bodies, we cannot argue from the body to the spirit; and even of the evolution of the body it is falsified, and far too greatly simplified, when it is viewed as proceeding in one continuous, unbroken ascent, unmarked by cyclic tides that rise and fall and rise again. Writers on religion, ignorant of the theosophic teaching of the law of cycles, have been far too uncritical in their acceptance of evolutionary theory; and Miss Underhill's lapses in this constitute one of the few false notes that jar us in her work. There is nothing in the flesh which can explain or give birth to the spirit; nor is there that in falsity which can explain or give birth to truth. In the things of religion, the current flows the other way. Miss Underhill would, we believe, be prompt to agree to this, yet often, as we have seen, she permits herself expressions that tacitly assume the contrary. It is the kind of error from which Theosophy would have saved her. B.

My Horse Warrior, by Lord Mottistone; Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., London; price, 5*s*.

Lord Mottistone is better known as General Jack Seely, the ever popular commander of the Canadian cavalry during the Great War; author of *Fear and Be Slain*.

If anyone loves horses, he should read *My Horse Warrior*, for he will then appreciate and love horses as he never did before. If anyone has had no opportunity to love horses, for lack of acquaintance with them, he should read this book to fill his soul with a new vision of nobility, courage, devotion. General Seely rode Warrior all through the War, and really loved him—a love which the horse returned a hundred-fold, with an intelligent valour such as any human might envy.

A magnificent *character*, is one way to sum it up; with the charm, the vivid personality, of a horse who will go down to history as a Prince among his kind.

The author concludes: "It is my dream that those who read this book may vow never to beat a willing horse. . . . Let there be one cruel blow from a grown-up man, and you have ruined the horse's fine soul and spirit for ever." A purpose and a principle with which every Theosophist will sympathize with all his heart.

But now, having praised the book as it deserves, there is all the more reason

to protest against the author's habit of whitewashing and praising the Germans on every possible occasion. He speaks of Richthofen, the famous German airman, as "perhaps the bravest on either side of that most gallant band of flying men". Comparisons in any case are odious; but, apart from that, why give the palm to Richthofen rather than to the Frenchman, Guynemer, or to any one of a dozen English airmen who, in terms of bravery—perhaps not of skill—could not have been surpassed? We know the answer to our question,—otherwise we should not have asked it: the author is a victim of that deplorable conventionality (sentimentality and vanity are at the root of it), peculiar to many Englishmen, which leads them to suppose that the "decent" thing to do, after you have thrashed a burglar, is to offer him a drink; later, to speak of him as a "plucky chap and first-class scrapper"; and, perhaps, finally—especially if you nearly got the worst of it—to turn him loose, regardless of your neighbours. Spurious "good sportsmanship",—and vicious, because it cloaks itself in that guise.

Some time after the war, says the author, he met Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, and learned that this ruthless agent of "frightfulness", who was responsible for some of the worst atrocities committed in France during the German invasion, had on one occasion noticed a group of horsemen galloping toward him on reconnaissance. The author, on Warrior, had led them, and, because Prince Rupprecht "remembered the episode", and because "good sportsmanship", when referring to a defeated(?) enemy, is interpreted as calling for the "Have a drink" attitude,—the author concludes: "Some day I hope he will come here and renew acquaintance with my old horse" ("here", meaning the author's home!).

This sort of thing is direct encouragement of evil; it invites men like Prince Rupprecht—and there are plenty of him in Germany—to do "next time" as they did before, and worse if that be possible. If no one cares, if no one remembers, if unrepented "frightfulness" is disregarded by men like Lord Mottistone, what chance have the Germans to learn that such conduct does not pay? It is worse than that: how can a man with any depth to him—by which we mean, with any real love of what is noble and hatred of what is brutal and vile—how can that man be willing so much as to touch the hand of a Prince Rupprecht? German soldiers, in many cases, were carrying out orders; but the men who gave those orders, the men, like Prince Rupprecht, who commanded German armies, have no such excuse, and ought to be ostracized by all "good sportsmen" to the end of time, unless and until they repent of the evil that is in them and of which they were notoriously guilty. T.

Le Crépuscule de la Monarchie—Louis XVI et Marie Antoinette, by Louis Madelin; Librairie Plon, Paris, 1936; price, Fcs. 18.

M. Madelin's earlier publications on the period of the French Revolution have won for their author a name needing no introduction. The present volume is noteworthy for the skill with which it gathers together the very numerous causes of the Revolution, weighs the relative importance of each, and presents

the whole picture of the last years of the monarchy in illuminating perspective. The present-day group of historians in France is doing much to eliminate misunderstandings caused by those of the older school whose practice it was to stress some one aspect of the great whole at the expense of all else, leaving the impression that except for one "chief" cause or another, the Revolution would never have occurred. M. Madelin weaves together the complicated network of causes with a sense of balance and proportion which gives the reader increasing confidence in his judgment.

An unusual approach is adopted, in that the period just prior to the Revolution is presented through the lives of its principal actors—Turgot, Necker, the King, the Queen. Valuable analyses of character, and of the interests, motives, theories and weaknesses which comprised the lives of these four persons, throw much light on the frenzied time leading up to the crisis.

Another outstanding feature of the book is its recognition of the inherent necessity of discipline and authority as the basis for national life. To-day's popular fallacy that a world free from restraint or repression would proceed to evolve in blissful peace, finds no place in this author's thought. Turning to the reign of *le Roi Soleil*, he sees its power based on the tacit recognition, from monarch to humblest plowman, of the truth enunciated by Descartes that all order is born of the triumph of will over passion, and of reason over nature. With the Regency, of course, came the inevitable swing of the pendulum—an extreme and far-reaching reaction—and under Louis XV, the expulsion of the Jesuits (to whom the author refers as "those resolute defenders of the principles of discipline", and one of the last forces of resistance to the pressure of intellectual and moral disorder), marked what some keen observers, even then, recognized as the beginning of revolution.

Together with other contemporary historians, Madelin regards the long-standing abuses of the Government and the "oppression" of the people, much decried by writers of the past, as not so serious in kind or degree but what they could have been, under a strong sovereign, readily corrected by gradual reforms, —providing philosophy (which in that day had no other aim or meaning than to throw off the yoke of authority) had not already sapped the nation and, in weakening all authority, struck at the throne itself. The mass of the French people, he claims—and he is not alone in this view—were devoted whole-heartedly both to the monarchy and the monarch, with no thought of their overthrow, but Louis XVI was unable and unwilling to exert authority, and that alone could have averted catastrophe. To Louis, the King of France was the father of his people, full of solicitude and forbearance, rather than a leader or a commander. "God forbid", he said, when the Revolution was upon him, "that a single man perish for my quarrel". It was not "his quarrel", observes Madelin—it was the royal authority which he was called upon to vindicate. Elsewhere, in speaking of the vital need in that day for a really great man as King, he adds, "but it would have been necessary in addition that this King should be able to rely upon a nation as respectful of the throne and of the authority of the sovereign as had been the France of Louis XIV". J.C.

The Menace of Japan, by T. O'Conroy; H. C. Kinsey & Company, New York; price, $3.00.

Professor O'Conroy spent fifteen years in Japan as a teacher. He married a Japanese woman. His publishers say: "During his long stay in the country, Professor O'Conroy lived in a circle almost exclusively Japanese. To all outward appearances he adopted their way of living. He became a 100 per cent Shintoist and Japanese. Indeed, even to-day, he has been unable to throw off completely the cloak of Orientalism that he assumed for the purposes of his work." Professor O'Conroy writes of himself: "I claim to be the greatest living authority on Japan in either hemisphere. I am not boasting. I know the Japanese as no other 'barbarian' on earth." His book has been banned in Japan, and if for no other reason than one of good taste, this would seem justifiable. His "100 per cent" Shintoism was indeed a cloak, a borrowed and ill-fitting garment. He is unable to understand the nature of Japanese patriotism, despite his cheerful announcement that, during the Great War, "Patriotism got even me!" If it did, it soon dropped him.

Professor O'Conroy sees clearly that the racial consciousness and life of the Japanese are inseparable from their age-long tradition of Shinto thought, and that their awareness of this has been developed since 1868. He seems to think, however, that the basic beliefs of Shinto are superstitions, and that the "Neo-Shintoism" of to-day fosters a self-satisfied and aggressive spirit which is a menace to the world. As a matter of fact, all Japanese are Shintoists by birth, but Shinto is declared not to be a religion. A Shintoist can be a Christian, a Buddhist or a Confucianist, and some find it possible to be all of these at once. Shinto is the veneration of the Supreme Spirit, of the Gods, of the Emperor as their descendant and representative, and of the spirits of the ancestors. Perhaps one might say that it is the veneration of all spirit wherever found, as part of the Supreme Being.

The Menace of Japan opens with a quotation from a lecture by Mr. Bunichi Horioka:

> Now it is our oldest and strongest belief that the Empire of Japan was originally entrusted by Ameterasu-O-Mi-Kami, who is known as the Sun Goddess, to her descendants, with the words: "My children, in their capacities of Deities, shall rule it." This was the origin of the Imperial Family.

The Emperor has always remained the embodiment of the nation's relationship with the Gods. This conception of the King as the incarnation of the national consciousness, and the bridge to its Divine Rulers, is as old as the history of man. According to the traditions of all the races, men were first ruled by Divine Kings, then by Heroes, and finally by men. But these men ruled because they were the agents of the Gods. The Pharaohs of Egypt descended, theoretically, from the Gods. The Emperor of China was the Son of Heaven. The Kings of Europe were such by Divine Right, a doctrine whose meaning is now completely misunderstood in Europe. If this doctrine is preserved by the Japanese, they may well be proud of their superiority, for it has almost disappeared from the rest of the world because of the materialism of the age. Men no longer desire to

discipline their wills to a higher law. They refuse to recognize any superior to themselves among men, or any connection with a spiritual hierarchy. The masses of men are always ruled by someone, and when they evoke a leader from their own level they are ground into a race of slaves. If they had any recognition of the spiritual hierarchy or reverence for it, the Divine Kings could begin to rule them again by fostering in them the free development of their own higher natures.

If Professor O'Conroy is incapable of understanding the basic ideas of Shinto, his comments on Buddhism are equally unillumined. He concedes that "Buddhism has left many foot-prints on the path of time, spiritual (*sic*), art, poetry, and above all the recognition that the higher animal, the human being, is different from a dog, in that it has the thing called soul." We should have thought that Buddhism recognized the soul in every atom of being. He has this to say of Zen Buddhism:

> Zen has fed the military mind since the Komakura (*sic*) period when the usurper Yoritomo was in power. . . . The sect asks that its believers spend certain times in concentration. This is achieved by sitting in small cold rooms bare of any furniture. The concentrator sits on the ground in orthodox Buddhist fashion, with his right toes high up on his left thigh and his left toes high up on his right thigh; the hands are folded deeply. He takes up this position opposite a blank wall and stares at this for some hours. Gradually in this manner his mind is relieved of all thought, and after repeating this process, involving the eradication of the imaginative faculty, for several years, on and off that is, he presumably develops into a fairly good soldier. Here I should point out that although the modern Japanese army was fashioned by German and French officers, they can fairly claim to have perceived this necessary adjunct, or rather subjunct, to the mental equipment of a soldier before the nations of the West.

It seems scarcely necessary to give any further example of Professor O'Conroy's abysmal ignorance and prejudice. His chapter on the position of women in Japan is appalling. All who know the Japanese women speak of them with unqualified admiration. They have become saints, apparently, without reforming the men. Perhaps that is the best way to start. Western women for a long time have tried to reform the men first, and neither sex, so far, has an overwhelming majority of saints.

We leave his book with the unhappy feeling that Western materialism is more menacing to the world than Japanese Jingoism. ST.C.LAD.

Mother Marianne of Molokai, by L. V. Jacks; The Macmillan Company, New York; price, $2.00.

This is the life-history of a noble-hearted woman, who dedicated herself, in company with others of her Order, to the service of the lepers of Molokai. The book is not only a record of what she herself accomplished, but is also a monument to the Franciscan Sisters of Syracuse, New York, who took part (and still take part) in her work. Readers of the QUARTERLY, always interested in genuine and sincere efforts to ameliorate the sufferings of humanity, are sure to regard this book with sympathy. The first part of it tells us briefly about Mother Marianne's youth, about the early years of her religious life,

and the beginnings of her volunteer work among the lepers of Honolulu. The remainder is given to an account of her life on Molokai Ahina itself—on desolate "grey" Molokai where, after thirty years of hard and devoted labour, she died, in 1918, at the age of eighty-three.

It is now close upon half a century since the world in general first began to hear (chiefly through the sympathetic pen of Robert Louis Stevenson), of Father Damien's heroic struggles there; but we do not know so much about Mother Marianne. Her first arrival on Molokai was a few months only before Father Damien's death, after which, much of the responsibility for his work among the leper men and boys fell upon her capable shoulders, in addition to her own work among the leper women and children. It is hard to imagine what life on Molokai must have been like in those early days, before the work of the Missions had been well organized. Most of us think of the lepers exiled by the Hawaiian government to that dreary, nightmare spot, as pathetically eager for help of any kind—eager to be nursed, cheered, guided. This was by no means the universal attitude, often quite the reverse. Many of them had for long been living "in grisly silence," up on the mountainsides, in ruinous, ill-kept shanties set in lonely little clearings. In the rank vegetation, hot and motionless under a tropic sun, these poor creatures had become "as wild as panthers". They shunned all religious and civilizing influences, and violently resented efforts to help them, preferring to continue the old habits of vice of every kind into which they had fallen. Many were the conspiracies for the murder of their would-be benefactors. But Mother Marianne was an unusually energetic and forceful woman, and she managed the difficulties of her position with great tact and wisdom; her quiet, firm voice brought instant order and discipline into any precarious situation; the most turbulent, the most rebellious were immediately brought into line by her "icy sternness" in moments of danger, and she smilingly faced the ingratitude of those whom she tried so faithfully to help. In reading the accounts of the plots hatched by the unhappy victims of this terrible disease, we get the impression that ingratitude may, perhaps, be one of its not uncommon symptoms. Many of us will remember the Bible story of the amazing ingratitude shown to the Master Christ when he healed ten lepers at the same time, and when one only returned to express gratitude for his release.

The book seems to us somewhat fragmentary in form, and at times almost disjointed, as though the author had had difficulty in getting together and in arranging his data in a convincing manner; but as a record of human fortitude, wide-reaching charity, homely good sense and unfailing intelligence, it is deeply interesting. T.D.

Thoughts on Death and Life, by William Ernest Hocking; Harper and Brothers, New York and London, 1937; price, $3.00.

Professor Hocking explains that his purpose is "not to prove immortality, nor to disprove it", but "to shake ourselves out of sophistication about it". In

spite of this somewhat negative aim, his work may actually have a more positive and beneficial effect upon many minds than would be the case if it were a simple and uncompromising statement of faith. It is a fact that many, perhaps most, people to-day think of immortality, when they think of it at all, as impossible, because "science" has proved it to be impossible. With admirable clarity, Professor Hocking exposes the complete inadequacy of materialistic arguments against the existence and the survival of the soul. There is no reason in the nature of things, as he shows, for the dogmatic assumption that "to one mind there is one and only one body"; nor are we obliged to postulate that the physical world to which our bodies belong is the only possible world in the great Universe. Professor Hocking has performed an invaluable service in showing that it is a sign of intellectual weakness to deny any possibility of immortality for the human being.

However, faith is a positive expression of the will, and cannot be generated in consciousness merely by intellectual argument. It must rest upon some intuition of reality, however dim and however confused. We agree with Professor Hocking that the experiments of spiritualism are valueless as evidence, but we do not agree that "the problem of the survival of death by human persons is an empirical problem for which we have no empirical evidence". There is testimony in all the great scriptures of the world-religions that certain individuals, like the Christ and the Buddha, have experienced and proved the fact of immortality in their own persons. "We feel and know that we are eternal", said a great philosopher, and there is no human soul which is incapable of realizing that feeling and that knowledge for himself. Otherwise the age-long faith in immortality would be unintelligible. Professor Hocking himself tacitly recognizes this fact in his illuminating distinction between "the self within the world" and "the self which hovers over experience, the inclusive, observing and judging self".

> For the sake of brevity, we may refer to these two aspects of the self . . . as two selves: the self which is within the world, and the self which contemplates the world from a point not within the world, and in this sense includes the world. We might designate these two selves (invidiously) as the selves of the lower level and of the upper level, or (inaccurately) as the observed and the observing selves. We might better call them the "excursive" and the "reflective" selves. The word "excursive" simply implies that the self-within-the-world is a self of behaviour, entangled in affairs; and that these affairs have the value of excursions, in the sense that they report their results back again to the centre from which the foray issued. If consciousness were a stream, it would go on and on with no attachments and no re-issuings; but as a series or system of excursions, each one launched under a working hypothesis subject to revision, we understand that it has its returns, its incessant new beginnings with equally incessant accumulation of meaning. The reflective self, behind scenes, is the constant judge, guide, initiator of this excursive activity. . . . Thus the reflective self, drawing its hints from the experience of a multitude of excursions, gives back to history always more than it receives. And the self which it makes is a self which it alone has conceived. If this account of decision is true, the terms freedom and creativity applied to human action have a certain literal force. The self gives actuality to possibilities; and *it has first made these possibilities*. . . . It would presumably remain something, and viable, even if the dated self it had built were obliterated. Death would then have a further meaning. Death would mean,

for the reflective self . . . separation from it [the dated self]—release from its growing burden. . . . Death would also mean the persistence of the maternal prowess of the reflective self within which lie germs of other gestations. Hence it would not necessarily mean loss of individuality, nor of sensation, nor of body, nor of objects.

Although Professor Hocking may be unaware of the fact, he has actually provided a text which might serve for a discussion of the theosophical doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. Why should the "reflective self"—the Reincarnating Ego, as we may call it—send forth a new "excursive self", a new "personality", into another, presumably "higher" world, until it has exhausted the possibilities of constructive experience here upon this earth? It is indeed the theosophical tradition that there are higher worlds or planes inhabited by subtiler bodies than the gross envelopes which we know; but the path to these superior levels of experience can only be entered when the lessons of our present order of physical existence are thoroughly learned. Incidentally, in the theosophical teaching, there is no implication that individual consciousness, more or less active, does not exist between incarnations.

It is impossible to mention all the excellent features of this book. For example, a broad field for meditation is suggested by Professor Hocking's statement that "the immediate feeling of life touches no limit either of beginning or end". There is also deep significance in his conclusion:

> It appears then that the meaning of human life suggested by biology lies outside the sphere of biology. The "ends of Nature" which mentality must somehow aid, if it is to have any place in biological theory, are pseudo-ends so long as Nature is assumed to be unconscious. . . . The metaphysics which we have been using is not that of emergent evolution, but more nearly that of Aristotle in his dictum that the nature of things is best seen in their completion, rather than in their apparent origins. From which follows an ancient intuition, that in the nature of things life is deeper than matter, and mind deeper than life.

S.L.

Beyond Normal Cognition, by John F. Thomas, with foreword by Professor Wm. McDougall; Bruce Humphries, Boston; price, $3.50.

We mention this book for the benefit of those who doubt, or who wish to convince others, that telepathy and clairvoyance are scientifically verified natural phenomena. The work on which the study is based was carried on at Duke University under university supervision. Most of the records analyzed were "absent sittings", that is, were taken when the person who alone knew the facts was some thousands of miles distant. The *Scientific American*, in its review of the book, says: "Telepathy and clairvoyance hypotheses seem by these studies to be validated". We are duly grateful for the concession; but why "hypotheses"? This "research" either established certain facts, or it did not. If it did, an attempted explanation of the facts might properly be described as hypothetical: not the facts themselves. But modern psychology is incapable of an explanation, and always will be,—until it condescends to adopt, as working hypotheses, the explanations advanced by Madame Blavatsky, which she derived from the present-day custodians of the Hermetic and Oriental

secret teaching. In brief, when it comes to explanation, more was known on these subjects in ancient Egypt than all the scientific psychologists in Europe and America combined will learn in a hundred years,—and their laughter at such a suggestion will be proof of their present ignorance. None the less, we welcome this book, and admire the courage of its authors in braving the contempt of all the smaller minds among their scientific confrères. They dare to go on record for the facts. X.Y.Z.

Miracles and Adventures: An Autobiography, by M. A. St. Clair Stobart; Rider and Co., London; price, 8*s*. 6*d*.

We found this book tiresome, for more reasons than one. It was advertized as a wonderful account of the Serbian Retreat during the Great War. It is nothing of the sort. It is an over-detailed account of what the author did, day by day, during that retreat, and while she undoubtedly showed splendid courage and extraordinary endurance, her avowed motive in large measure was to demonstrate that she (a suffragette) was in many manly ways, better than most men; and as she, a married woman, was the mother of two children, and had thus performed a feat of which no man is capable, it seems to the reviewer that she might have been content to let it go at that. We have yet to hear of a man, outside of an asylum, who thought he had a mission to prove himself as good as, or better than, women in womanly occupations; but while that remark has point, it is a point which women of Mrs. Stobart's type, do not seem able to appreciate.

It was suggested also in the advertisement that this autobiography contained much of occult experience. It contains none. The author is a Spiritualist. Spiritualism, she says, is "clearly authorized by the Bible. . . . The prophet Samuel, who was called a prophet of the Lord, had appeared at the séance held by King Saul with the medium of Endor. Jesus himself had communicated with the spirits of Moses and Elijah, and but for the psychic vision of Paul on the road to Damascus, it is doubtful whether the world would ever have heard of the Christian religion." This levelling-down of Masters and Initiates to the status of mediums, will not, we are thankful to say, appeal to students of Theosophy. On the contrary, it will tend further to convince them that Spiritualism, as H.P.B. said, is a degradation of occultism, and that mediumism throws the door wide open to witchcraft, to black magic, and to other prostitutions of spiritual realities. S.M.A.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 404.—*Is it possible for anyone to develop* any *talent? Is not the total absence of a given talent an indication of a definite limitation?*

ANSWER.—It is a question of what we want, and of how much we want it and why, and of whether we take sufficiently long views. The total absence of a given talent might well be a definite limitation, as far as this life is concerned. But we have all seen qualities of character develop, in one lifetime, to an astonishing extent. Assume that talents are the result of development of character, and that we desire some particular talent, not for our own use, but for the service of the Masters. It should be possible for us, through our effort and through the help which we might receive because of our motive, to possess, in a future life, that talent which we desire and which we now lack. C.R.A.

ANSWER.—We do not realize the efficacy of the power available to us, for we pervert, scatter and waste it. If we would marshal our forces, properly direct and concentrate them, we could develop *any* talent, in shorter or longer time and to a degree. There is ample proof of this in the world about us. For example, may we not have heard, or perhaps have met, some person who delights us because of his diction and enunciation, and have learned how lacking in those faculties he was previously? In a real sense, there is no such thing as the total absence of a talent. Potentially, all talents are available to all men; but, by continued misuse of force, originally Divine, and by frittering away energy, talents have become atrophied. It is we who have placed limitations upon ourselves. Speaking from a higher and truer point of view, the absence, so-called, of a talent, is a *finite* limitation only. In the infinite, there are no limitations. It is our task to enter the Eternal and to dwell there, not losing hold "on the calm Spirit that dwells within". When we shall have obtained and held that position, the infinite gifts of the Eternal will be offered to us, gifts which must include any and every talent we may need in serving the behests of Spirit. G.M.W.K.

ANSWER.—The question seems to ignore Reincarnation. Man is *potentially* divine, and is capable of infinite development. "There are the powers of all Nature before you; take what you can." The possession of any given talent in one incarnation is the fruit of effort to develop it, not in one, but, perhaps, in many previous incarnations. The motive behind development of any talent is love for what it expresses, and an ardent desire to possess it, which in turn has resulted in intense effort and sheer hard work to develop it. The lack of a talent is evidence of failure to employ the means necessary to acquire it, and should be acknowledged as such. It should not be viewed negatively as a limitation which one is compelled to accept; neither should one conclude that there is nothing that one can do about it. Man's limitations are self-imposed, self-created. An earnest student of Theosophy would do well to waste no time in vain regrets over the lack of any talent, but rather to examine himself as to his motives—whether they are prompted by vanity or envy of others—and to use this means of self-study in order to promote development of character, and thus to try to discover what is the lesson which the Masters wish him to learn in this particular incarnation. G.H.M.

ANSWER.—It is possible for anyone to develop any talent in time, given sufficient desire and willingness to sacrifice for it. The time, however, may be several life-times. There are no limits to the potentialities of the soul, and it has often been said that there are no powers in the universe that we are not destined ultimately to wield. There are, however, obvious limitations to any particular personality. A blind man, for example, cannot learn to paint in that incarnation. He must wait to develop a new instrument that can see. We shall be wise to study ourselves, and to realize our limitations as they exist at any given moment. We shall be most unwise to accept any existing limitation as permanent. Qualities and abilities which have been developed in former lives and which are unknown to us may be brought to manifestation by effort, or by a comparatively slight spiritual advance. If the proper performance of our duties, or the need of others, call for the development of a particular quality, we may be sure that we have the power to develop it. We must also have developed sufficient understanding to be trusted to use wisely any quality which will enhance our ability to serve. To accept a limitation as permanent, is self-indulgent laziness. To maintain a constant struggle to surmount it, is a victory in itself, no matter how little progress we may seem to make. J.F.B.M.

ANSWER.—All powers and talents are inherent in the Soul and can be developed, but not necessarily in this life. The apparent absence of a talent is due to Karma, probably to neglect or misuse in a past life. Also, we share the Karma of the family into which we are born, which may mean certain pronounced traits, or lack of them. We have the talents we need for *this* life. What use are we making of them? That is the main question. C.M.S.

ANSWER.—Rajas (desire or passion) having dwindled in "Anglo-Saxons" to attacks of the fidgets, the dominant characteristic of most of us is *tamas*,—inertia, laziness. "I have no talent for that", usually means that we have not really tried and do not want to "take pains". Amiel said: "Doing easily what others find difficult is talent; doing what is impossible *for talent*, is genius." Yet even genius is said to be "an infinite capacity for taking pains".

In brief: do not let "lack of talent" serve as an excuse for laziness. If it be *your duty* to draw, or write, or speak in public, or drive an automobile, you can learn to do it, and can learn to do it well if prepared to pay the price of taking *pains*. T.

ANSWER.—There is a difference between old souls, and what H.P.B. called "baby egos". Dire need in previous incarnations has usually compelled the former to exert themselves in widely diversified directions,—which means latent capacities in all those directions. Its *use* will evoke the capacity. The limitations of "baby egos", on the other hand, are real, though this is no excuse either for laziness or discouragement: there is the cheering thought that even a pig can be taught to dance. M.A.V.

NOTICE

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society will be held throughout the winter and spring at 64, Washington Mews (between Washington Square and East Eighth Street), on alternate Saturday evenings, beginning at half-past eight and closing at ten o'clock. Branch members will receive a printed announcement giving the dates. The same announcement will also be mailed to non-members who send their names to the Secretary T.S., P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York. Out-of-town members of the Society are invited to attend these meetings whenever they are in New York, and visitors who may be interested in Theosophy are always welcome.

INDEX TO VOLUME XXXIV

Appeal of Theosophy; *G. M. W. K.* 315
E. A. 308

Beatrice of Dante, The; *Katharine Hillard* 154
H. P. B. 68

Cavé 15, 100, 191, 280
Centurion 52, 124, 294
Coronation, The 193
Correspondence 83, 171
J. C. 42
Miles C. 212

Education Through the Arts in Secondary Schools; *V.* 136
English Way to the Goal, The; *J. C.* 42
Esoteric Discipleship; *H. C. B.* 115

Follow Up!; *Miles C.* 212
FRAGMENTS; *Cavé* 15, 100, 191, 280
Frère servant 197

Griscom, Clement A. (G. Hijo,) 333

H. G. 209
Hetep-en-Neter 17
Hillard, Katharine 154

Imperial Heredity, An; *J. F. B. Mitchell* 24
In Memoriam 88

G. M. W. K. 315

S. V. L. 200

"Man, Know Thyself"; *H. G.* 209
Man, the Measure of All Things; *S. V. L.* 200
Mitchell, Henry Bedinger 102, 281
Mitchell, J. F. B. 24

NOTES AND COMMENTS 5, 91, 179, 267

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME; *T.* 142, 319

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS 86, 174, 263, 349

Remarks by the Way 65, 121
REPRINTS: Beatrice of Dante, The; *Katharine Hillard* 154
Talk With My Brain, A; *G. Hijo (Clement A. Griscom)* 333
What Are The Theosophists?; *H. P. B.* 68

R..... 33

REVIEWS:

Ancient Life in Mexico and Central America; *Edgar L. Hewett*..... 82
Beyond Normal Cognition; *John F. Thomas*..... 347
Contendings of the Apostles; *trans. by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge*..... 76
Crépuscule de la Monarchie, Le; *Louis Madelin*..... 341
Damien The Leper; *John Farrow*..... 262
Dhammapada, The; *trans. by Irving Babbitt*..... 74
Diversity in Holiness; *R. H. J. Steuart, S. J*..... 258
Emerson Today; *Bliss Perry*..... 81
Faiths and Fellowship..... 171
Marie Antoinette: A Slandered Queen; *Nesta H. Webster*..... 167
Mathematics for the Million; *Lancelot Hogben, F. R. S*..... 260
Mediæval Legends of Christ; *A. S. Rappoport, Ph.D*..... 168
Menace of Japan, The; *T. O'Conroy*..... 343
Miracles and Adventures; *M. A. St. Clair Stobart*..... 348
Modern Alchemy; *Dorothy M. Fisk*..... 80
Mother Marianne of Molokai; *L. V. Jacks*..... 344
My Horse Warrior; *Lord Mottistone*..... 340
New Bible Evidence; *Sir Charles Marston, F.S.A*..... 165
Orpheus and Greek Religion; *W. K. C. Guthrie*..... 256
Pascal: The Life of Genius; *Morris Bishop*..... 260
Pensée et le Mouvant, La; *Henri Bergson*..... 168
Return to Religion, The; *Henry C. Link, Ph.D*..... 255
Speak to the Earth; *Vivienne de Watteville*..... 78
Thoughts on Death and Life; *William Ernest Hocking*..... 345
Worship; *Evelyn Underhill*..... 338

Septenary Man in Ancient Egypt; *Hetep-en-Neter*..... 17
Stone of Destiny, The; *Frère servant*..... 197
L. S...... 291

Talk With My Brain, A; *G. Hijo (Clement A. Griscom)*..... 333
Temptation; *L. S*..... 291
Theosophy and Democracy; *Henry Bedinger Mitchell*..... 102
Theosophy and Its Critics; *R*..... 33
T. S. ACTIVITIES.....88, 176, 215, 350
T.....142, 319

Van Gogh, Vincent; *E. A*..... 308
V..... 136

What Are The Theosophists?; *H. P. B*..... 68
WITHOUT CENSOR, VIII, IX, X; *Centurion*.....52, 124, 294

You; *Henry Bedinger Mitchell*..... 281